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FREDERIC CHOPIN:

HIS LIFE, WORKS, AND LETTERS.

BY

MORITZ KARASOWSKI.

WITH THE PORTRAIT OF CHOPIN AND FAC SIMILE OF THE ORIGINAL
MANUSCRIPT OF HIS E MINOR PRELUDE (OP. 28, No. 4).

MOTTO:

Chopin ist und bleibt der kühnste und stolzeste Dichtergeist der Zeit.

ROBERT SCHUMANN.

SECOND VOLUME.

CINCINNATI:

JOHN CHURCH & CO.

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Translator's Dedication.

TO MY BROTHER,

J. ETHAN ALLEN,

THIS TRANSLATION, WHICH HAS BEEN REVERENTLY, BUT
PERHAPS IMPERFECTLY MADE, IS AFFEC-
TIONATELY DEDICATED.

ELISE J. ALLEN.

Washington, D. C., 1883.

FREDERIC CHOPIN;

HIS LIFE, LETTERS, AND WORKS.

VOLUME II.

CHAPTER I.

DESTRUCTION OF LETTERS AND OTHER MEMENTOS OF CHOPIN
IN WARSAW—STAY IN MUNICH—HIS DEPARTURE TO PARIS.

AFTER Chopin's death, his effects in Paris were put up at public sale. A Scotch lady, Miss J. W. Sterling, his pupil and enthusiastic admirer, bought the furniture of the two *Salons*, together with the mementos which he liked to have about him during his life time. She took them all to her home, and formed therefrom a kind of Chopin-Museum. In this interesting collection was a portrait of the talented artist, painted by his friend Ary Schaeffer; a Pleyel piano on which Chopin was accustomed to play; a service of Sèvres porcelain, bearing the inscription: "*Offert par Louis Philippe à Frédéric Chopin, 1839;*" a costly, richly inlaid casket, (a present from Rothschild); and lastly, carpets, table-covers, fauteuils, etc., almost all the handiwork of ladies who had been his pupils.

Miss Sterling decreed in her will that after her death the mother of the artist, whom she herself revered so highly, should fall heir to all these mementos. In 1858, therefore, they were sent to the home of the latter in Warsaw. After the death of the mother in 1861, Chopin's sister, Mrs. Isabella Barcinski, came into possession of them. This lady occupied the second stories of two neighboring

houses, which form a sort of partition between the "New World" and "Cracow Suburbs," and belonged to Count Andreas Lamogski.

Immediately upon the breaking out of the political troubles which preceded the insurrection of January, 1863, a number of young men, being excited in the highest degree, had resolved, and that, too, against the general feeling, to threaten the lives of all the rulers. These unfortunate assaults, evoked by patriotic fanaticism, continually failed, but they were, nevertheless, renewed from time to time; excited to the highest point by the bloody struggle which was raging in the whole country, such an assault was projected against the person of Count von Berg, who, after the recall of Arch-Duke Constantin Nikoeaiewicz, became the highest authority in Poland. On the nineteenth of September, 1863, about six o'clock in the evening, Count Berg, surrounded by an escort of Tscherkessen, was returning in his carriage from the Belvedere to the royal castle. When the carriage reached the place where the "New World" and the "Cracow Suburbs" meet, a shot was fired from the fourth story of Count Zamozski's house, followed by some Orsiñi-bombs. A great confusion immediately arose in the street, no one was killed, however, and only some horses of the escort were wounded. A few minutes later a detachment of the military, which at that time stood upon the Saxon Platz, always ready to march, appeared. The soldiers surrounded the two houses; all the women who were found in them, whether dressed or undressed, were dragged into the street, then, however, set free; the men, on the contrary, were taken under military escort to the citadel. As lava streams from the crater, consuming and sweeping along in its fiery course all that lies in its way, so the furious soldiery rushed headlong from one story to another, relentlessly hurling down every thing before them. Furniture, pianos, books, manuscripts, in a word, every thing which was found in the house was thrown from the windows into the street. Very large pieces of furniture, as for example, wardrobes with the linen and clothing, were hewed to pieces with hatchets by those in advance, the feet of the piano were cut off, etc., etc. These two houses, being in the most beautiful part of the city, were in-

habited only by people in good circumstances, and one can imagine what a mass of furniture they contained when one considers that from fifteen to twenty pianos were actually found in them. When the senseless, furious soldiers reached the second story of the house which was occupied by Chopin's sister, all the effects of the great artist which had been preserved by the family with the greatest reverence, were destroyed. The piano (from the manufactory of Buchholtz), the first confidant and reproducer of his youthful works, was thrown by the vandals into the street*.

As the night came on, the soldiers built a bon-fire of all these things on the Platz, at the base of the monument of Copernicus, and brought from their barracks, vessels filled with wine, spirits and sugar, plundered from the stores of merchants. They mixed their punch and drank it amid the resound of joyial songs; in order to keep up the fire, they finally threw into the flames all pictures, books and papers, among which were letters from Chopin, addressed to his family eighteen years before. Eye-witnesses assure us that an officer gazed for a long time at the portrait of Chopin, painted by his friend's hand, before pitilessly surrendering it to the flames. The bright glare of this fire spread above the city, showing to the startled citizens that the hour of military terrorism was come. The loss of all the souvenirs is less painful than the destruction of the letters, in which Chopin had poured out his whole soul, full of love for his family, of patriotic devotion to the land of his birth, of enthusiasm for his art, and admiration for all that is beautiful and noble. These letters were, besides, of great interest and value to the historian of civilization, since Chopin wrote them from Paris during a period in which he was daily winning laurels as an artist, and meeting persons of the highest rank, as well as the Coryphaeuses of Paris. So vividly and faithfully did he portray his experiences to his parents that they were able to form readily a distinct idea of all these persons. It is also to be regretted that these communica-

*The Pleyel instrument, which was sent from Scotland in 1858, was fortunately not among the other souvenirs, but passed into the possession of Chopin's niece, Madame Ciechoruska, who lived in the country.

tions, sparkling with merriment and brilliant wit, have been lost to the world. Indeed, one stroke of Chopin's pen portrays the most interesting and important of his associates often more strikingly than the long, deliberately-penned, diffuse description of many an author.

The summer, the sunniest, fairest time of his life was between the years of 1832 and 1837; his residence in Vienna, as appears from his letters written in this place, was its spring-time, rich in artistic reveries and hopes. But it depressed the easily discouraged artist, that many of these hopes failed to be fulfilled. His constitution was delicate, his nervous system irritable from excessive piano-practice; he lacked, therefore, unfortunately, the energy of which no one stands so much in need as the musician, who wishes at the same time to give public concerts. When Chopin met obstacles, he yielded instead of conquering them. He liked to enjoy ease with his friends, and the life of the artist, above all, demands manly effort. A stranger in Vienna, he was obliged to rely upon others for advice, and partly confiding as a child, partly—according to his mood—distrustful, he doubted his advisers. Being a Pole, the disturbances in his native country prevented him from receiving the protection of persons high in authority in Vienna. Among artists, he met with general indifference, sometimes even envy. Thus, irresolute and discouraged, he looked on, as during the season other pianists earned money and applause, while he himself took part only in a single *matinée*, which the singer Garcia-Vestris gave in the great Masquerade Hall on the fourth of April. It was not until the beginning of June that he gave a concert of his own,* which was poorly attended

* We find this concert mentioned in No. 38 of the "*Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*" of September 21, 1831, as it appears by Kandler: "Frederic Chopin has appeared in a public concert here; he has already taken his place as a pianist of the first rank during his stay here last year. The performance of his late earnestly-written concerto in E-minor gave no occasion to revoke our former judgment of him. True respect is due to one who is so honestly concerned for true Art." Other Vienna journals spoke in the same way of his compositions, praising his skillfulness and his soulful playing; nevertheless, this recognition was still too slight for the young and hopeful artist.

and was more expense than profit to him, since the wealthiest inhabitants of Vienna had already left the city, as they are yearly accustomed to do, but partly now in consequence of the cholera epidemic. Deceived in his expectations, he went to Munich. There he was obliged to remain some weeks, awaiting money from Warsaw for the journey to Paris. During this time he had opportunity to become acquainted with the first artists of Munich, among whom were Bärmann, Berg, Schunke, and Stunz, all of whom, upon closer acquaintance with him, were delighted with his playing and works, and urged him earnestly to appear in the public concerts of the Philharmonic Society. At one of these, Frederic played his E-minor concerto, accompanied by the orchestra. The listeners, transported by the beauty of the composition, and his own excellent and poetical performance of it, overwhelmed the young virtuoso with stormy applause and genuine admiration. But this music, with which he delighted his impressionable public, was his swan-song upon the German stage; for, during his eighteen years' residence in foreign lands, he never again appeared before the German public as an artist. It seemed as if the last sojourn in Vienna had forever robbed him of all desire to do so. Encouraged by his success in Munich, Frederic left this hospitable city and went to Stuttgart, where a heavy blow fell upon him—the news of the capture of Warsaw by the Russians, September 8, 1831. Grief, anxiety and despair over the fate of his relatives and his beloved, filled his cup of sorrows. Under the influence of this sad mood, he wrote, in Stuttgart, his magnificent C-minor étude, (the last in the first collection which was dedicated to Liszt), called by many the "*Revolution étude*." Amid the frantic and tempestuous passages of the left hand, the melody rises, now passionately, now in proud majesty, until the listener, thrilled with sweet shudders, imagines that Zeus is hurling his thunderbolts down upon the human race.

In this state of mind, Chopin, at the end of September, 1831, went to Paris. Upon his passport was written: "*Passant par Paris à Londres*." Many years afterward, when he had been naturalized,

and was become a citizen of France, he would often say, laughingly:
"I am only passing through the city."

Here ends the information for which I am indebted to the Chopin family, and I am now compelled to relate according to my own recollections, and according to material which I have gathered from Chopin's Paris letters, and from the communications of trust-worthy persons, who through correspondence or personal intercourse knew much of him in the French capital.

CHAPTER II.

RESIDENCE IN PARIS—CHOPIN'S INTENTION TO STUDY UNDER KALKBRENNER, CORRESPONDENCE WITH ELSNER IN RELATION TO THIS—LETTER TO TITUS WOYCIECHOWSKI—CHOPIN EXPECTS TO LEAVE EUROPE AND TO GO TO AMERICA—HIS PLANS FAIL—HE DECIDES TO RETURN TO WARSAW—SOIREE AT ROTHSCHILD'S.

WHEN Chopin came to Paris, a certain political excitement was still prevailing there. Louis Philippe, despite all the efforts of the Legitimists, as the adherents of Charles X and his successors were called, governed by grace of the barricades upon the ruins of the legitimate dynasty. As we have said, it was still unquiet; factions existed in every stratum of the population. Although this state of affairs is unfavorable to Art, still political life was without importance for Frederic, who had come to Paris, not to appear before the public, but solely to extend his own studies. Soon after the capture of Warsaw, the Polish army took refuge in Prussia and Austria, and many of these warriors came to Paris. On their way through Germany the fugitives met sincere sympathy on all sides.* All those who were prominent during the insurrection, whether ruling or fighting, members of the Diet, officers, poets and authors, who by their patriotic songs or newspaper articles had encouraged the nation in the struggle, feared the revenge of the Russians, and sought refuge in France, in hope that this country would, sooner or later, interest itself warmly enough for the wrong done to Poland, to assist it to

* Leipzig especially distinguished itself in this respect. Several German poets also expressed their sympathy for the oppressed Polish nation in songs full of power and inspiration.

recover its rights. The consequences of this unhappy error were frightful. Thousands of intelligent men had left Poland, men who were not to be replaced; for with their departure the light grew dim which they had kindled on the field of Science and Art; there were no worthy successors to be found, and that was just what the Russian government wished. Many years of sad experiences were needed to finally convince the Poles that their expectations were foolish, their attempts to free themselves useless, all hopes of help from France vain. Chopin was, of course, soon surrounded by his countrymen who arrived at Paris, and intimate relations between himself and them were soon formed. Reassured with regard to the fate of his relatives in Warsaw, his mind became gradually more cheerful, and he frequently asked himself: "What shall I do next?" The plan which he had formed at home for his Art-tour had been completely thwarted and he was obliged to devise a new one. It appeared impracticable to give a concert in Paris, for who would have interested himself then in a young and unknown pianist who possessed the boldness to give a public concert? The brief praise of the Vienna and Leipzig journals made no impression in Paris, because the inhabitants of this great capital were busied with politics and diversions of every kind. The musical public, moreover, attached little or no importance to critiques which were found in the foreign press. The Parisian imagines that the dictum which emanates from Paris is the oracle for the whole world; only on the Seine has one the right to make or to destroy an European reputation. Frederic was unwilling that the precious time should pass unemployed; far from regarding himself as a finished artist, he decided anew to turn to Kalkbrenner and, under his guidance to continue his studies.* At that time Frederic Kalkbrenner stood at the height of his fame, as a virtuoso and was esteemed the first pianist of Europe. Chopin, therefore, made him a visit, during which he announced his desire to become his pupil. The celebrated artist asked the young Pole to play something for him, and naturally discovered what a child of genius he was, and that he had nothing more to learn. Chopin, modest, and full of holy zeal to

attain to the very highest in his Art, had no thought of what was passing in Kalkbrenner's mind during his playing. The latter certainly possessed already a reputation as a pianist which needed no enhancement, but a pupil of such genius as Chopin possessed, would nevertheless win for him the reputation also of an excellent teacher. He thought it prudent, therefore, not to refuse a pupil of such extraordinary talent. Kalkbrenner, whose judgment was decisive, who considered his own opinion infallible, or knew how to make it appear so, thought that he must find some fault with Chopin's playing, and made the objection that his principle of fingering was quite contrary to the classical method; he found further that his playing gave no evidence of a good school; that as a musician and composer, he was certainly gifted and upon the right road, but that he might easily go astray. As Chopin listened silently, Herr Kalkbrenner declared that he was ready to instruct the young man, in order to win him from his faults, which would be a continual hindrance to him in the exercise of his art, but only on the condition that Chopin would pledge himself to receive instruction from him three years at the least. Chopin was much astonished at this; but as he was yet unconscious of his own real value, he determined not to decide at once in this, to him, highly important matter. He wrote, therefore, to his father and to Elsner, in order to learn his wish and the view of his former teacher. Elsner was not a little astonished at Kalkbrenner's pretension; he asked himself why the celebrated artist should desire so long a time with a pianist like Chopin. Was it, perhaps, to destroy in him what he could already do, and the originality which he already possessed? Elsner knew better than any other what a deep fountain of musical invention existed in Chopin, and how far his technical skill as pianist was already developed. Elsner preferred that Chopin's activity as player should go hand in hand with his career as composer, than that the liberal development of his creative power should be dwarfed by one-sided musical studies. He wrote to his beloved pupil according to his conviction:

WARSAW, November 27, 1831.

DEAR FREDERIC:—I read with pleasure in your letter, that the first pianist (as you write), Kalkbrenner, has received you so kindly. I became acquainted with his father in Paris, in the year 1805; his son, who was still very young, was even at that time distinguished among the best public players. It delights me that he has promised to reveal to you the mysteries of Art; but I am astonished that he requires three years for it! Did he think, perhaps, when he saw and heard you for the first time, that you need so long a time to acquire his method? or that you ought to apply your musical gift only to the piano, and your talent for composition only to this *genre* of musical productions? If he, with his artistic experiences of our Art in general, will but serve you specially, if he be your true friend, then be to him a grateful pupil. But in the teaching of composition, one should not be narrow-minded and unscrupulous, especially with pupils whose capabilities evince a certain independence of invention. Such must be allowed rather to go their own way, and to seek that which was hitherto undiscovered. The pupil must not only stand upon one round with his master in point of Art, he must, if important individual talent sustain him, strive beyond that, and so to cultivate his individuality that he may shine personally.

Performance upon an instrument, be it ever so excellent, as for example, Paganini's upon the violin, or Kalkbrenner's upon the piano, with all that delights us, should be a means only, but never the end of music. The reputation which formerly Mozart and Beethoven enjoyed as pianists has long ago died away, and their compositions, although they are undeniably classical, must yield, in relation to the varied, tasteful treatment of this instrument to the modern taste of the day. On the contrary, their other productions, which have not been written especially for one instrument, continue to live. For example, their operas, symphonies, quartets, etc., will always remain among modern musical productions, will never be equaled, perhaps, by these *sapienti pauca*! A pupil should not be confined too long to one method, and to the taste of one nation. The truly beautiful ought not to be imitated, but

should be felt in combination with the individual genius. As a rule in Art is not to serve one man or one nation; godlike nature being the only completeness. Single individuals, as nations also, only give examples which are more or less effective. In a word, that wherewith the artist (who is constantly learning from his surroundings), astonishes his contemporaries, can only acquire perfection of and through himself. The cause of his deserved reputation, in the present as in the future, is no other than the individuality of his gift, which reveals itself in his art-works. More hereafter. Be so kind, I pray, to commend me to Count Plater, Gozmaxa, and Hofmann. Many greetings for Lesueur, Pæer, Kalkbrenner, and Norblin; embrace Orłowski in my name.

JOSEPH ELSNER.

Elsner's very important reflections were thus answered by Frederic :

HONORED HERR ELSNER:—Your letter was a new proof to me of the fatherly care and genuine interest which you cherish for me, your grateful pupil. In the beginning of the last year, although I knew what was yet lacking in me, and how far I was yet from reaching the model which I have in you, I ventured, nevertheless, to think: I will approach him, and if not a Lokietek, then, perhaps, a Laskonogi may yet spring from my brain.* To-day all such hopes are destroyed; I am forced to this thought: that to shape a way for myself in the world, as a pianist, I must allow the higher artistic aim of which you write, to slip for a time into the background. In order to be a great composer, one must possess, besides creative power, also experience and self-criticism, which, as you have taught me, is attained not only by listening to the works of others, but still more by the faithful proving of one's own work. Several young and competent pupils of the Paris Conservatory

* Lokietek and Laskonogi were kings of Poland, and were so called because the former was very small, and the latter had very slender legs. In 1818, Elsner wrote an opera entitled "Lokietek, which met very great applause in the national theaters.

await in idleness the bringing out of their operas, symphonies, and cantatas, which, as yet, have only been seen upon paper by Lesueur and Cherubini. I am not speaking now of the small theaters, although success is difficult even there. If one have the good fortune, finally, as Thomas Nieuwe, to obtain a reputation in the "*Leopoldstadter Theater*," no great advantage results to the composer from that, even if the work be valuable, as we have seen. Even Meyerbeer, who, nevertheless, had been regarded with honor for ten years in the musical world, waited in vain in Paris for three years, working and paying, before he succeeded in bringing out his opera "*Robert le Diable*," which is now creating such furor. Auber preceded Meyerbeer with his works, which met the sympathy of the public, and a place was not so quickly accorded to the foreigner in the Grand Opera.

According to my conviction, he is the more fortunate, who is able to bring out his own compositions. I am known here and there in Germany as a pianist; several musical journals have mentioned my concerts favorably, and express the hope to see me soon take a distinguished place among master-pianists. To-day I had opportunity to fulfill a promise made to myself; why should I not seize it? I do not wish to learn piano-playing in Germany, for no one there could tell me what it is that is specially lacking in me. Even I have not seen the beam in mine own eye. Three years of study is much too much; this, Kalkbrenner himself finally decided, when he had heard me oftener. You can see from this, honored Herr Elsner, that a true, deserving master does not know the feeling of jealousy. I would certainly decide, however, to study yet three years, if I had the certainty to attain then the goal which I myself have marked out. So much is clear to me: I will never be a copy of Kalkbrenner; he will not be able to break my perhaps bold, but noble determination to create a new Art-era! If I continue to study, I do so, only that in the future I may stand upon firm ground. It was not difficult for Ries, who was then already a celebrated pianist, to gain laurels for his opera, "*Die Räuberbraut*," in Berlin, Frankfort-on-the-Main, Dresden, etc.; and how long was

Spohr known as an excellent violinist before he had written *Faust*, *Jessonda*, and other works? I hope you will not withhold your blessing from me, when you see upon what foundation and with what intention I continue to strive. My parents must have told you that I have appointed my concert for the twenty-fifth of this month. The arrangement of this is giving me much vexation, and if it had not been taken in hand by Pæer, Kalkbrenner, and especially by Norblin (who sends you most cordial greeting), I should not be able to accomplish any thing here. Just think, two months at the very least are needed to get up a concert in Paris. Bailbot is very friendly toward me. He is to play with me a quintet by Beethoven; Kalkbrenner will play a duet with me, with accompaniment by four pianos. I know Herr Reicha only by sight. You can imagine how curious I was to make his personal acquaintance. I have already seen some of his pupils here, but from them I have formed no prejudices in favor of their teacher. He does not love music, never attends the concerts of the Conservatory, will speak with no one about music, and when he is giving a lesson does nothing but watch the clock. Cherubini conducts himself similarly; he is always speaking of cholera and revolution. These gentlemen are mummies whom one must regard respectfully from afar, and from whose works one must draw instruction. Fétis, whom I know, and from whom much can be learned, lives outside the city, and comes to Paris only on account of his lessons. It is said that he is forced to this, because his debts exceed the revenue from his "*Revue Musicale*." He is sometimes in danger of making intimate acquaintance with the debtor's prison. You must know that here a debtor can only be legally arrested in his own dwelling. For this reason Fétis has left the city and lives in the neighborhood of Paris, heaven knows where.

There are a number of interesting men here in various departments to admire. Three orchestras, one at the *Académie*, another at the "*Italiens*," and a third at the *Théâtre Feydcan*, are to be mentioned as excellent. Rossini is director of the Italian Opera, which is certainly at present the best in Europe. Lablache, Rubini, Santini,

Pasta, Malibran, Shröder-Devrient, delight the elegant world three times a week. Nourrit, Levasseur, Derivis, Madame Damoreau, Cinti, and Mademoisella Dorus are the first stars at our Grand Opera. Chollet and Mademoiselle Casimir Prévost are admired at the Opera Comique. In a word, here only can one learn what singing is. I believe that at present Pasta is no longer the greatest singer in Europe, but Malibran-Garcia. Prince Valentin Radziwill is quite carried away by her, and we often wish that you were here, for you would be enraptured by her singing. Leseuer sends thanks for your greeting, and commissions me to return it a thousand times. He always speaks very kindly of you, and is continually asking me: "*Et que fait notre bon Monsieur Elsner? Récoutez-moi de ses nouvelles,*" and immediately speaks of the requiem which you sent him. We all here love and esteem you, from your godson, young Anton Orlowski, down to myself. I fear that this dear friend of mine will be obliged to await a long time the bringing out of his opera. The subject is not extraordinary, moreover the theater is closed until New Year. The king does not like to spend money, the artists need much, and only the English pay well.

I could write until morning, but I will not tax your patience too much. Accept the assurance of the reverence and gratitude with which I remain ever your faithful pupil,

FREDERIC.

Not only Elsner's letter, and the remarks of friends, but Chopin's sound common sense also, told him how superfluous and even injurious this instruction would be for him. His penetration led him to discover very justly that he must either become an imitator of Kalkbrenner, a machine well filled with his method, or he would not harmonize with him long as a pupil. He, who had maintained his independence beside Field and Hummel, saw that he could do nothing more prudent than to renounce Kalkbrenner's instruction and go his own way. In order to remain in friendly

relation with Kalkbrenner, and also from true respect for him, Chopin dedicated his E-minor concerto to him.

Chopin writes at this period to his friend, Titus Woyciechowski:*

PARIS, *December 16, 1831.*

MY DEAR TITUS:—Your letter has given me new power of life! I received such various news, some of which greatly disturbed me, because I often interpret wrongly the intelligence of my family. K. had expressed himself so strongly that, as I read his words, I was terrified by my own thoughts.

It is to be hoped that we will see each other again! I have experienced much pain over every thing. Who could foresee this?†

Have you also, not forgotten the subject of our deliberations the last night before your departure from Vienna? Hitherto fate has bound me hand and foot. Here I breathe freely. . . . But for that reason I must even sigh the more! Paris offers every thing that you can wish. You can amuse yourself, weary yourself, laugh, weep, do generally what pleases you, no one observes it, because thousands are doing the same. Every one goes his own way unimpeded. I can scarcely believe that in any one city there are more pianists than in Paris, or anywhere more dolts and virtuosi. I came here as you perhaps know through my family, with very few letters of introduction. Malfatti had given me a letter to Pärer, then I had still a few from the Vienna publishers, this was all.

When I received in Stuttgart news of the capture of Warsaw, I firmly decided to go to Paris. I made the acquaintance of Rossini, Cherubini, Baillot, and Kalkbrenner, through Pärer, who is hof-Kapell-meister here. You can imagine how eager I was to hear Herz and Hiller play; they are nonentities beside Kalkbrenner. To

*The letters sent later from Paris to his friend, Titus Woyciechowski, were lost, as the latter assures us, with the exception of two little notes, which were written in the year of Chopin's death, and were the last written communications to his friend.

†Reference to the revolution in Poland.

speaking honestly, I, too, can play as Herz plays, but I would like to be able to play like Kalkbrenner! If Paganini be perfection, Kalkbrenner is also, but in quite a different way. I can not describe his repose, his magical touch, the smoothness of his playing; one discerns the master in every note; he is a giant who overshadows all other artists. When I presented myself to him, he asked me to play something for him; what was I to do? As I had heard Herz, I took courage, seated myself at the instrument and played my E-minor concerto, which gave such delight in the Bavarian capital. Kalkbrenner was astonished, and asked me if I were a pupil of Field? He said that I had the style of Cramer, but the touch of Field. It amused me that when Kalkbrenner was playing something for me, he made a mistake, so that he was not able to continue, but it was wonderful to see how he recovered himself. Since this meeting we see each other daily, he either visits me, or I him. He proposed to me to instruct me for three years, and to make a great artist of me. I told him that I knew quite well what I yet lacked, but I do not wish to imitate him, and three years are too much for me! He has convinced me that I only play well when I am inspired to it, less so, when this is not the case. This can not be said of Kalkbrenner; he plays at all times alike. When he had watched me a long time, he found that I belonged to no school; that I was certainly upon a very good way, but that I could easily go astray, and that if he should cease to play there would no longer be a representative of the great piano-school. With the best will, I can create no new school, because I know not even the old one; but I do know that my musical productions have somewhat of individuality, and that I am ever striving forward. If you were here, you would say to me, "Learn, my boy, so long as it is offered you!" But many dissuade me from taking lessons, thinking that I play equally as well as Kalkbrenner, and that he wishes to have me for a pupil only out of vanity. That is nonsense!

Whoever understands any thing of music must value Kalkbrenner's talent, even though he be no favorite, because he does not as-

sociate with every one. But I assure you there is something higher in him than in all the masters I have yet heard. I have written this to my parents also, who fully comprehend it; Elsner however does not understand it, and thinks it is from jealousy that Kalkbrenner not only does not praise me, but even wishes my playing to be in some respects different. Despite all this, I can tell you this in confidence, that I have already a distinguished name among the artists here. I am to give a concert on the twenty-fifth day of December. Baillot, the rival of Paganini, and Brod, the famous oboist, will bring their talent to my support. I shall play my F, minor concerto, and the variations in B-major. I received a few days ago from Cassel, a review of the variations ten pages long written by a German who is filled with enthusiasm over them, and who after an extensive preface speaks then of each measure. He does not regard them as variations in the conventional style, but as a fantastic picture. Of the second variation he says that Don Juan and Leporello run; of the third, that he caresses Zerline and in the left hand it is shown how Masetto is vexed by it. In the fifth measure of the Adagio, he feels how Don Juan kisses Zerlina in D-flat major! A comical notion of the reviewer, who actually wishes that this article shall be published in the "*Revue Musicale*," (a journal belonging to his brother-in-law, Fetis). The concerto of the good Hiller, who is a pupil of Hummel, and a youth of great talent, produced a great effect day before yesterday. A symphony by him was received with much applause. He has taken Beethoven for a model, and his work is full of poetry and inspiration. He has shown himself very friendly toward me, in so far that he has told Fetis' brother-in-law, that his critiques might inspire me more than benefit me.

But to come again to my concert:—I am to play, not only my F-minor concerto and the variations, but also with Kalkbrenner, his own duet, "*Marche Suivie d'une Polonaise*" upon two pianos, with accompaniment by four others. A thoroughly wild idea is it not? One of the pianos is very large and for Kalkbrenner; the other is small (a so-called Monocorde) for myself. Hiller, Osborne, Stamaty and

Sowinské are to play upon the other large ones, which are as loud as an orchestra. Norblin, Vidal, and Urhaw, the celebrated viola-player will also take part. The greatest difficulty was to find a singer. Rossini would willingly have assisted me to procure one, if he alone could have granted the permission, but Robert, the second Director of the Italian Opera was opposed to it. He assured me that he could allow me to have none of the singers, for if his complaisance toward me should be known, hundreds of similar requests would be made of him. Of the Opera, I must tell you that I have never heard so beautiful a representation as in the past week, when "*Barbier de Seville*" was given at the "Italiens" with Lablache, Rubini, and Malibran-Garcia. "*Othello*" will likewise be excellently represented by Rubini, Lablache, and Pasta; also "*Italiana in Algeri*." Paris has never yet offered so much in this respect as now. You can form no idea at all of Lablache. They say that Pasta has lost somewhat in voice; but I have never in my life heard such heavenly singing as hers. Malibran commands three octaves with her wonderful voice; her singing is enchanting, matchless in its kind! Rubini, an excellent tenor, executes endless roulades, indulges often in too much ornamentation, trembles and trills continually, for which he reaps the greatest applause. His *mezza voce* is incomparable. Shroeder-Devrient is appearing now; but she makes less furore here than in Germany. Signora Malibran played "*Othello*," Shroeder-Devrient, Desdemona. Malibran is small, the German larger. It was thought several times that Desdemona would strangle Othello! This was a very expensive performance; I paid twenty-four francs for my seat, just to see Malibran play the Moor, and that, too, not extraordinarily well. The orchestra was distinguished, but the *mise en scene* in the "Italiens" is nothing compared with that in the French "Academie Royale." If ever a brilliant *mise en scene* has been presented in the former, I do not believe it has been attained by "*Robert le Diable*," the new five-act opera of Meyerbeer, who has also written "*Crociato*." "*Robert*" is a master-piece of the modern school, in which devils sing through

the speaking-trumpet, and the dead rise up out of their graves, but not as in "Szarlatan," only fifty or sixty persons at once! *

The stage represents the interior of the ruins of a convent, illuminated by the clear, full moonlight, which falls upon the graves of the nuns sleeping within. In the last act, monks appear in a pompous splendor of light, with incense, and at the same moment the solemn sound of the organ is heard behind the scenes. Meyerbeer has made himself immortal by this work, but he needed more than three years in order to bring out this opera. It is said that he spent more than twenty thousand francs for the organ and other objects which were used in this representation.

Madame Damereau-Cinti also sings very beautifully. I prefer her singing to Malibran's. The latter fills one with astonishment, but Cinti enraptures. She sings the chromatic scales and runs almost more perfectly than the celebrated flutist, Tulou, plays them. It is scarcely possible to find a more cultivated technique.

In Nourrit, the first tenor of the Grand Opera, one admires the warm feeling which is revealed in his singing. Chollet, the first tenor of the Opera Comique, the most admirable personator of Fra Diavola, and excellent in the operas "Zampa" and "Fiancée," apprehends the parts in a way which is entirely characteristic. He carries every one away with his sympathetic voice, and is the favorite of the public. In the Opera Comique, they are now giving the "Marquise de Brinvilliers;" she was a most notorious poisoner of Louis XIV.'s time. The music to this libretto is by eight composers, namely, Cherubini, Pær, Herold, Auber, Berton, Batton, Blangini, and Caraffi.

I pray you, above all in the world, dear Titus, write to me quickly, or come yourself. My residence is, Boulevard Poissonniere 27. W. W. is expecting you. I would like much to see you, and there are moments when I am almost insane from yearning, especially when it rains and I can not go out. I believe that at my concert I shall be supported by the most interesting artists.

Till death, your FREDERIC.

* "Szarlatan," an opera by Kurpinski, performed with great applause at Warsaw.

From these letters we see that Chopin was delighted with Paris; he found himself also in a respected position there among celebrated artists, but there were many things yet remaining to be desired. He had come to Paris with very moderate means, without reputation, without protection. He did not wish to be continually taxing the kindness of his father, who was not a rich man, and had still daughters to provide for; and however beautiful France, and especially Paris, was for him, it was still a strange land, and the numerous countrymen, with whom he associated, tarried there only as fugitives. He could hear his Fatherland spoken of only with bitter pain. Under such circumstances he limited his expenses as much as possible, and shared his apartments with friends who were also in limited circumstances. He had hoped to make himself honorably known to the musical public by his concert; but it could not take place on the day appointed for it, as the theater director, Veron, would not grant any singer permission to co-operate with him. It had to be postponed until the twenty-sixth of February, 1832; but, unfortunately, it did not even meet expenses, for only the wealthy among the emigrant Poles attended it; the French public was almost entirely absent. His acquaintances consoled him and represented to him the fate of other artists, who in their youth had likewise had to contend with many obstacles. His best friends—and he possessed indeed some—advised him to go more into society for which opportunity was not lacking to him. He was not, however, to be convinced by that. The letters which he wrote at this time to his parents, all had a melancholy coloring. The residence in Paris had become unpleasant to him, through the lack of every prospect of bettering his condition. He employed his thoughts, therefore, with another plan. He learned that some young Polish fugitives, who could, and would not, remain in Paris, had decided to go to America. As Chopin knew that able artists were still lacking in the new world, he believed that it might also be of advantage for him to seek his fortune there, and thus be no longer obliged to apply to his father for support. Frederic knew very well that his parents expected complete confidence from him,

and he communicated his intention to them, while he sought to convince them that he could do nothing better than leave France and seek his fortune on the other side of the ocean. Here we must ask involuntary, what rôle Chopin, with his romantic and poetical nature, would have played in a country where the tendency to be cool and thoroughly practical predominates above all else? He, who, his whole life long, had a horror of charlatanry, who possessed the most elegant taste and aristocratic tendencies, how could he have been pleased with America? how could the Americans have been able to appreciate him? Perhaps, if he had only settled down as a teacher he might have made much money, but his name would then surely never have shone among the highest in the musical world. It was fortunate for Chopin that his parents were wholly opposed to this emigration. They wrote to him to remain for the present in Paris, and hope for better fortune, or to return to Warsaw. They would rather see their son, when his pass had expired, exposed to the inevitable unpleasantnesses to which the Russian government subjected every one who remained in foreign countries, than allow him to emigrate to America. Love for his native country, for his family, and for the one whose image he bore deep in his heart, excited the most ardent longing in his breast to return to his home, although it was not easy for him to leave Paris with its manifold charms. His friends and Art-colleagues, Franz Liszt, Hiller, and Sowinski, urged him not to go away from Paris; but Chopin would not listen to their words.

It was called accident by many, but surely it was a higher Providence, that Chopin, on the same day that he had appointed for his journey, should meet Prince Valentin Radziwill on the street. The Prince addressed him kindly; Chopin communicated his intention to him, and took leave of him. The former did not venture to dissuade him from it, but he exacted from the young artist the promise to accompany him in the evening to Rothschild's. How important this evening was for him, and how often did Chopin remember it. In the brilliant *salons* of the financial king, the musician, robbed of every hope, met the *élite* of Paris. When the lady

of the house, in a kindly manner, asked Chopin to play something upon the piano, he played and improvised as perhaps never before. The whole company of listeners was enraptured; each vied with the other in expressing to Chopin his respect and admiration, and never grew tired of praising his wonderful talent.* From this evening his condition changed as if by magic; the future once more smiled upon him, the mist which had obscured the sun of his days was dissipated before the beams of his star of fortune. Various requests also were made to Chopin at this soirée, to give instruction in the first families of Paris. His pecuniary conditions improved daily. He had no longer any need to accept assistance from his parents, and banished the thought of a return to Warsaw completely from his mind.

* Vide: "Les musiciens polonais et Slaves," by Albert Sowinski, Paris, 1857.

CHAPTER III.

THE PROSPECT GROWS BRIGHTER FOR CHOPIN IN PARIS—A LETTER FROM ELSNER—MOSCHELES' AND FIELD'S OPINION OF CHOPIN—EXPEDITION TO AIX-LA-CHAPELLE, CARLSBAD, MARIEN, DRESDEN, AND LEIPZIG—VISITS TO MENDELSSOHN AND ROBERT SCHUMANN.

AT the time when Chopin's star was beginning to shine on the horizon of Parisian society, his name as a composer was also gradually becoming known in the musical world; thus from the year 1832, the works which he had composed partly in his native country, partly in Vienna, Leipzig, Paris, and on his journeys, were widely circulated. Of these may be mentioned, the three Nocturnes, op. 15; Bolero, op. 19; Scherzo, op. 20; Grande Polonaise brillante, op. 22; Ballade, op. 23; four Mazourkas, op. 24; two Polonaises, op. 26; two Nocturnes, op. 27; Impromptu, op. 29. Most professional critics, as we have already said, decidedly condemned these works, and denied to them any artistic value; but there were also some, though few in number, who acknowledged unreservedly the boldness and originality of thought, the unusual richness of harmony and the novelty of form in Chopin's compositions.

The peculiar principle of fingering which did not agree with the traditional method of piano-playing did not offend them. Field and Moscheles, on the contrary, could not pardon Chopin his frequent deviations from the customary and hitherto acknowledged faultless principles of playing, and regarded him in this respect as a rash innovator. In the year 1833, Moscheles wrote of Chopin's earliest works: *

I willingly spend a few leisure hours of an evening in familiariz-

* Vide "*Aus Moscheles Leben*," Leipzig, 1872.

ing myself with the Etudes and other compositions of Chopin. I find moreover a great charm in their originality and the national coloring of their motives; but my fingers always stumble at certain hard, inartistic, to me incomprehensible modulations; while the whole often appears to me too sweetish, too little worthy of the man and cultured musician." Further on he says again: "I am an honest admirer of Chopin's originality; to the pianist, he has given the most novel and attractive features. But to me personally, the artificial, often forced modulation is repugnant; my fingers stumble and stagger over such passages; I may practice them as I will, I can not play them without balking." Moscheles afterward modified this opinion somewhat, still this serves to show the impression which the celebrated pianists received of Chopin's earliest works.* Field feared lest the star of his glory would be obscured by the new, dazzling light which was rising upon the musical horizon. He openly called Chopin, "*un talent de chambre de malade*." This opinion of Chopin, which obtained chiefly in Germany, was forever silenced under the strokes of Eusebius' and Florestan's pens, introduced by Robert Schumann into the arena of criticism through the "*Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*," which he edited.

The fame and favor which Chopin enjoyed in the drawing-rooms of Paris, increased with extraordinary quickness. He was overwhelmed with requests to take part in public concerts, because it had become well known that he exercised a great power of attraction upon refined society. On the twentieth of May, 1832, he played in the concert which the Prince von der Moskowa gave in the hall of the Conservatory for the benefit of the poor. The gifted artist had chosen the first allegro of his F-minor concerto, with orchestral accompaniment.

Girard directed. Heinrich Herz had invited Chopin and Liszt to play with him a quartette for eight hands upon two pianos, at a concert which he wished to give with his brother Jacob on the third of April, 1833.

Orgowski, one of Chopin's fellow music pupils, wrote at this time

* Vide *Aus Moscheles Leben*.

to his family: "Chopin is well and strong, he is turning the heads of all the French ladies, and the men are jealous of him. He is all the rage now, and very soon the beau monde will wear gloves *à la Chopin*. But the yearning for his fatherland is consuming him." His friend, Johannes Matuszynski, who came to Paris in the same year (1834) to study medicine, says almost the same in a letter to his brother-in-law in Warsaw: "The first thing I did in Paris, was to hunt up Chopin. It is impossible to describe our great mutual joy at meeting again after a separation of five years. He has grown strong and large; I scarcely recognized him. Chopin is now the first pianist here; he gives a great many lessons, but none under twenty francs. He has composed much and his works are much sought after, I live with him, *Rue Chaussée d'Antin*, No 5. This street is somewhat removed from the *Ecole de Médecine* and the hospitals, it is true; but I have good reasons for being with him; he is my all. We spend the evenings at the theater or make visits; when we do n't do this, we pass the time pleasantly at home."

Elsner, although far from his favorite pupil, followed his artistic development with the warmest interest and rejoiced over his success. He wrote to him at this time as follows:

WARSAW, *September 14, 1834.*

Dear Friend:—All that I hear and read concerning my dear Frederic fills my heart with joy; pardon my frankness: but all that you have done as yet does not satisfy me, who was your little deserving but fortunate teacher of harmony and counterpoint, and who will remain one of your best friends and admirers. I should like to witness the bringing out of your opera, while I still live in this vale of tears, not only in order to see your fame increased, but also for the benefit of musical art in general, especially if the subject of the opera be taken from Polish history. I do not here say too much. You know that I can not flatter, because I know both your genius and your ability, and what the critic says of your mazourkas will only be realized and attain permanent value in * the opera.

* I do not know to what review and to what Mazourkas Elsner refers here. A

Urban says "that a piano-composition stands in the same relation to that of the voice, the orchestra or other instruments, as an engraving does to an oil-painting." This judgment will always be apposite, although some compositions (especially when you perform them) may be regarded as colored engravings. What a pity it is that we are no longer able to see and to speak to each other. I should have much to tell you. I would like also to thank you for the present, which is of twofold value to me. Gladly would I be a bird, to visit you in your Olympian dwelling, which the Parisians consider a swallow's nest.

Farewell, love me, as I you, for I remain forever your sincere and well-wishing friend.

JOSEPH ELSNER.

Elsner's letter prompted Chopin to think seriously of composing an opera. As he lacked a libretto, he applied to one of his friends, Stanislaus Kozmian, with the request that he should write one for him and select the material for it from Polish history. Unfortunately, Chopin soon relinquished the projected scheme, either from want of time, or because he feared that the Russian Government would be opposed to the national opera. Perhaps, also, the great favor and the rapid circulation which Chopin's piano-compositions met with every-where, especially in Paris, influenced the artist to remain true to this kind of music. In February, 1834, Chopin gave his second public concert in Paris, the most brilliant of the season. It took place in the Italian Opera House. He brought out on this occasion, under Habeneck's direction, his E-minor concerto for the first time. Every thing seemed to promise the most brilliant success for the young concert giver. The hall was filled with the cream of

very short account of the Mazourkas, op. 6, in the "*Allgemeine Musikzeitung*," No. 12, of the year 1833, scarcely mentions the composer; the only thing which is said is: "that a breath of sadness pervades the desire for the dance which fills Chopin's music." Elsner can not, therefore refer to this. Ralstab's notice of the Mazourkas, op. 8, in the "*Iris*," No. 28, 1834, is not even worthy of mention, since Chopin was attacked in that, and not at all acknowledged.

the Parisian aristocracy, of whom Chopin was the favorite. The presence of the most distinguished artists did still more to contribute to the interest of this musical event. But Frederic's hopes were greatly disappointed, his delicate, poetical playing could produce no great effect in the large hall of the theater; the listeners did not go into transports, and were therefore not inclined to express their hearty applause. Chopin felt this and lost for a time the desire to be heard again in public in a large room. The sphere in which the laurel bloomed for the gifted, deep-feeling artist was the *salon*, a narrower circle of poets, artists, connoisseurs. As the noblest, rarest plants can thrive only in a mild climate, so could the sensitive, highly cultured Frederic play with pleasure and give delight only in the best society, in the presence of persons who knew how to appreciate all the delicacy and elegance of his playing. It was also not in Chopin's nature to seek the favor of a great public. It could be said of him with Goethe:

" Wer den Besten seiner Zeit genug gethan,
Der hat gelebt für alle Zeiten! "

Since his residence in Paris, he had made no more musical excursions, with the exception of a journey to Rouen in the same year, in order to take part in a concert, which his friend Orłowski was preparing to give in that place. This was a great sacrifice which Chopin made to friendship, since every public appearance was disagreeable to him. He said to Liszt confidentially: "I am not fit to give concerts. The public makes me timid; its breath stifles me; its inquisitive glances paralyze me; I stand amazed before these strange faces. But you, you are called to it; for when you do not win the love of the public, you can at least shock and stupify it."

When Chopin found himself surrounded by a circle of beautiful women, and his glance met friendly and well-known countenances, then a new, poetical life awakened within him. The expression of melancholy which so often cast a gloom over his face, gave place to a charming, sympathetic smile, the serious, refined expression of his features became indescribably attractive. His conversation sparkled with wit, and by his fresh, harmless humor, he exerted an in-

describable influence, without knowing or even willing it, upon those by whom he was surrounded. When he was in a good humor he would seat himself at the piano, where he could delight and elevate by his improvisations, or if *Comus** ruled him, he would evoke the loudest, most innocent merriment among his hearers. He was often in such moods in French houses, but oftener in Polish ones; in the latter he naturally felt more at home, for there he could, even in the heart of Paris, imagine himself in his beloved Fatherland. It was gratifying to him that every thing new in the province of polite literature was sent to him. If poems pleased him, he at once created a melody to them, which was very quickly circulated by his friends Fontand and Orda (the latter a youth of great promise, who was killed at Algiers). Prince Casimir Lobomirski also, Gizmala, and other musical Poles interested themselves for these improvisations of Chopin, and made them known.

In the houses of the Countess Komar and her charming daughters, one of whom was the Princess Beauvan, these songs of Chopin were often heard, and to these ladies, he was always a welcome guest.

The intelligent Princess, as well as her younger sister, Countess Delphine Potocka, who was noted for her unusual beauty and enchanting singing, collected the *élite* of the literary and artistic world of Paris about her. That the latter produced a deep, peculiar impression upon Frederic's impressionable heart, is no wonder, and none the less, that he with silent delight accompanied her charming singing with his masterly playing.

In the latter part of May, 1834, Chopin determined for the first time to leave his pupils and go with Ferdinand Hiller to Aix-la-Chapelle, to attend the great Nether-Rhenish musical festival which Mendelssohn directed. Chopin's acquaintance with the celebrated composer of "Paul" dated from the year 1832, in Paris, and, founded upon mutual esteem, became now more and more firmly developed. Mendelssohn was at that time director of the city orchestra in Düsseldorf, and was delighted to see in Aix-la-

* *Cosmos*—among the ancient Greeks, the god of jesting.

Chapelle, his old friends, Hiller and Chopin, whose compositions he highly esteemed. During the festival-days the former was as much as possible with the Parisians and on the 23d of May he wrote to his mother in regard to them as follows: * "They have developed their skill still more, and as a pianist Chopin is now one of the very first. He creates as many novelties on the piano as Paganini on his violin, and produces marvels which one would never have thought possible. Hiller also is an excellent player, powerful but capricious enough. Both are laboring somewhat under the Parisian distemper and sentimentalism, and have often too much ignored measure and rest and what is strictly musical. I have gone perhaps a little too much to the other extreme, and thus we supplemented each other, and learned, I think, all three, one from the other. I seemed to myself somewhat like a school-master, while they must have felt like *nurli-flores* or *incroyables*. After the festival we traveled together to Düsseldorf, and spent a very pleasant day amid music-making and discussions thereon. I then accompanied them yesterday to Cologne and this morning they took the upward bound steamer for Coblenz, I the downward one, and—the pretty episode was over."

The next year was to bring a great joy to Chopin. The Warsaw physicians had earnestly persuaded his father to go to Carlsbad for his health. When Frederic was assured that he should find his parents in Carlsbad, he left Paris at the end of July and a few days later embraced the beloved ones whom, for five years, he had painfully missed. The joy of this meeting can not be described, it can only be felt. Their dear little Frederic had in the meanwhile grown to be a man; he had become stronger and more serious, he had acquired a certain bearing which well became him, and he had won an honorable reputation in the artistic world; but in his love, attachment and gratitude toward his parents, he was still the same Fritz, who, as a child and later as a youth, had rejoiced the heart of father and mother. Very pleasantly sped the time for the Chopin family; but sooner than the parents and son could wish, the hour

* Mendelssohn's Letters, Vol. II., page 296.

of parting came. It was a hard and bitter hour for Frederic as well as for the kind father and tender mother. Again and again the latter pressed her only son to her heart, and vainly sought to silence the voice in her soul which softly but ceaselessly said: "You will never see your dear Frederic again in this world!" The kind parents, always solicitous for the welfare of their son, had indeed seen him for the last time.

On his way back to Paris, Chopin stopped a few days in Leipzig. It was already known there that he expected to arrive within a short time, and there was of course much eagerness in musical circles to hear the playing of the author of such original and poetical compositions. The interest with which Chopin was expected in musical Leipzig was increased by the contradictory criticisms which had been passed upon his works. Frederic Wieck, the father of the celebrated pianist, Clara, wrote a letter* to the music-teacher Nauenburg in Halle, from which one may see what interest the arrival of Chopin called forth among musicians. The letter reads as follows:

*"Most Honored Friend:—*I received your letter of the nineteenth only yesterday evening, through the city post, and reply to it at once. As Banek returns to-morrow, we shall all be together again. With reference to music, the following: the first subscription concert under Mendelssohn's direction is to take place October 4; the second, October 11. Chopin is to arrive from Dresden to-morrow or day after, but he will probably give no concert here, for he is very lazy. He might perhaps remain here longer if he were not dissuaded by false friends (especially a dog of a Pole) from becoming acquainted with Leipzig from its musical side; Mendelssohn, however, who is very intimate with Schumann and myself, will, on the contrary, appear. Chopin does not believe, according to an expression which he uttered in Dresden to a colleague, that there is a lady in

*This letter, without date, but probably about the latter part of September, 1835, is found in the autograph collection of Hermann Schoetz, of Dresden.

Germany who is able to play his compositions. We shall see what Clara can do."

The ill-humor of the estimable musician, who speaks so disparagingly of Chopin, and so rashly of his supposed false friend, does not appear to me to be well founded. If Chopin gave no public concert in Leipzig, it was because he was only passing through the city and did not, therefore, intend to give any; he had, moreover, a decided aversion to appearing in public. Chopin mingled cordially with the resident artists of Leipzig; he played some of his compositions for them at Mendelssohn's house, he also heard Clara Wieck, and was delighted by her poetical playing and astonished that she, still so young, had attained such eminence. He prophesied a brilliant future for the young artiste. That Chopin really doubted if there were a lady in Germany who could play his compositions well, is possible; but it is improbable that he expressed this doubt; for he always conducted himself gallantly toward ladies, and was, as we know, a genuine admirer of Fräulein Blahetka's playing. In one of Mendelssohn's letters to his sister, Fanny Hensel, we find the following:

LIEPZIG, *October 6, 1835.*

. . . Namely, the day on which I had accompanied the Hensels to Delitzsch's, Chopin was there; he intended to remain only one day, and so we were together the whole of this day and played music. I can not deny, dear Fanny that I have lately found out that in your judgment of him you did not do him sufficient justice. Perhaps, too, when you heard him he was not in the right mood for playing, which often happens to him, but his playing has again delighted me, and I am convinced that if you and father had heard some of his best pieces as he played them for me, you would say the same. There is some thing very peculiar, and at the same time so much that is masterly, in his piano playing, that he may be called a finished performer; and as every kind of perfection is pleasing and agreeable to me, this day was a very delightful one, although so very different from former ones with you, Hensel's. I was very glad to

be once again with a real musician, not with such mediocre, half-classical performers, who would write in music, *les honneurs de la vertu et les plaisirs du vice*, but with one who has a thoroughly decided style. And even though it may be as far different as possible from my own, still I can get along with him splendidly, but save me from these half-and-half people. It was really odd Sunday evening, when I had to play my oratorio for him, while the curious people of Leipzig crowded stealthily in, in order to get a sight of Chopin; between the first and second parts, he furiously dashed off for these astonished people, his new *études* and a new concerto, and I then continued in my "*Paul*;" it was as if an Iroquois and Caffre had met and were conversing with each other. He has also an exquisite new nocturne, much of which I retain in my memory, to play for Paul's amusement. Thus merrily we spent the time together, and he promised in all earnestness, to come again in the course of the winter, if I would compose a new symphony and bring it out in his honor; we both swore it before three witnesses, and now we will see, if each will keep his word."

This letter shows that Mendelssohn's antipathy to Chopin's compositions was by no means great, and that he found many of them even highly interesting; consequently those authors are in error, as for instance Ehlert,* who number Mendelssohn among Chopin's opponents. It is said that Mendelssohn did not allow his pupils to play Chopin's compositions. So far as I know, the composer of "*Paul*" and "*Elijah*" had no time for lesson-giving; and if he did not recommend Chopin's works to the pupils of the Leipzig Conservatory, it is very easily understood. Mendelssohn, in his love of justice, considered it a duty to combat the aversion of his sister (who had been educated according to the classical method) to the playing and compositions of Chopin.

Chopin's second and last sojourn in Germany occurred in the year 1836. Under the pretext that he needed the waters of Marien-

* See "Musical Letters to a lady friend."

bad, he traveled thither, where the fate of his life was decided. Every flame, even the purest and brightest, must be finally extinguished when it no longer receives fuel. Constantia Gladowska, to whom the youthful Frederic had once looked up as to a saint, had married in Warsaw. When Chopin received this news he was deeply grieved and at the same time embittered. But time, which heals all wounds, exerted its influence on his suffering heart; in Paris Chopin met some young Poles of good family, the brothers Wodzynski, who had formerly been under the care of Chopin's parents at the *pension*. He became acquainted, through these, with their sister, Fräulein Maria Wodzynska, a young lady who was as charming as she was lovely. He was involuntarily attracted toward her when he saw her for the first time, and gradually from the interest with which she inspired him, there ripened a deep, earnest love. He knew that in the middle of July he would find her with her mother at Marienbad, and he journeyed thither, his heart full of longing and blissful hope. Frederic soon discovered that Maria also was attached to him and having exchanged confessions, they were betrothed with the joyful sanction of her relatives. When they left Marienbad, the Wodzynski family decided to spend a few weeks with Chopin in Dresden. Frederic felt at that time at the very acme of happiness. His geniality was felt by every one; his friends remembered the harmless but often severely effective jests which he had perpetrated in his early youth during his visits in the country, and rejoiced that the renowned artist, the idol of Parisian drawing-rooms had retained his naturalness and charming modesty.

They laughingly reminded him how he had often taken the dainty kid-gloves of his sisters when he was not able to buy new ones for the *soirée-visits*; how he had promised the children that he would send therefor gloves by the dozen from Paris, which he really did, so soon as he was firmly established there. He often mimicked at the piano the most celebrated masters of Europe, and imitated their habits even in the minutest shadings. He frequently played his Mazourkas, which are full of sweet sadness; he showed them how they ought to be played in quick rhythm, if they were to be

employed as dance-music. When his family was the subject of conversation he became serious, he was then no longer the artist following his moods, but only the son, full of filial gratitude, and the fond brother. From the hour of his birth to the end of his life, he had received only proofs of the tender love of his family, so that his heart, full of gratitude and susceptible to tenderness was bound with a thousand irrefragable ties to parents and sisters. With such sensibilities this wide separation was naturally much more painful to him than to another who had a less passionate love for his family.

At that time when he was flattering himself that he should soon become a happy husband, he had formed the plan of leaving his second home, the enticing Paris, with its charms, its dazzling *solons* in which he had been honored with so many triumphs, and return to Poland. He wished to settle in the country, in the neighborhood of Warsaw—near to those whom he most loved—to make no more display of his musical genius before the world, to found public schools, and (without concerning himself about the public) to live in retirement with his beloved art. With these thoughts he took leave, as he believed only for a short time, of his betrothed and his friends, and set out upon his journey to Paris, by the way of Leipzig.

Frederic had written to Robert Schumann, who had long desired to become personally acquainted with Chopin, and who now awaited him with eager expectancy. Chopin also was greatly rejoiced to be able at last to grasp the hand of so important a man as Schumann, and express his respect for him in person. Schumann wrote concerning this meeting to Capell-meister Henrich Dorn, as follows;

LEIPZIG, *September 16. 1836.**

My Very Dear Sir:—Day before yesterday, just as I received your letter and was about to answer it, who should drop in upon me but Chopin? That was great joy. We spent a beautiful day, which I still celebrated yesterday . . . I have a new ballad by Chopin. It appears to me to be his most genial but not most ingenious work;

*"A Biography," by Joseph Wilhelm von Wasielewski, Dresden, 1869.

I said to him, that among all this pleases me most. After a long, meditative pause, he said with great emphasis: "That pleases me; it is my favorite also." He played for me besides, a number of new Etudes, Nocturnes, Mazourkas, all incomprehensible. It is an inspiring sight to see him at the piano. You would like him very much. But Clara is a more skillful player, even than he. Imagine perfection, a masterly skill, which appears to be totally unconscious of itself!" Happy at the cordial reception which was given him in the house of the great German artist, Chopin, having first laid a wreath on the monument of Prince Joseph Poniatowski,* left Leipzig, absorbed in deep thought. He believed that now his nomadic life was at an end, and that with the performance of new duties, he would at the same time begin a new existence. The remembrance of his beautiful betrothed lifted him upon the roseate wings of fancy - into an ideal land, and conjured before his mind's eye, images of inexpressible happiness and blissful hopes. Alas, stern reality was soon to awaken him from these sweet dreams and strike into his heart a deep and painful wound. Soon after his return to Paris, Chopin received the news that his promised bride, Maria, preferred to marry a count instead of a talented artist. This event had very serious consequences for Chopin. With the design to suppress and forget the ignominy inflicted upon him he threw himself—after he had seen that his beautiful hopes of an ideal marriage were destroyed—into the arms of a woman who exercised the most baneful influence upon him.

*The monument of Prince Poniatowski, who was drowned in the Elster, October 19, 1813, is placed in the present Gerhard Garden, formerly the Reichenbach Garden.

CHAPTER IV.

CHOPIN'S ACQUAINTANCE WITH GEORGES SAND—HIS LIFE IN THE SOCIETY OF HIS FRIENDS—WINTER RESIDENCE ON THE ISLAND OF MAJORCA—(1838-1839).

IT had rained the whole day ; Chopin, to whom dampness was unendurable, and whose irritable nervous-system suffered greatly under change of atmosphere, was in a very gloomy mood. None of his acquaintances had visited him in the course of the day, no new book had entertained and enlivened him, no melodious thought had sounded within his brain, demanding a form. Finally, when it was almost ten o'clock, it occurred to him to visit the *salon* of the Countess C, who had her *jour fixe*, on which a circle of intellectual, charming persons always collected about the lovely hostess.

As he mounted the tapestried steps, it seemed to Chopin, as if he were followed by a shadow from which there streamed an odor of violets. A presentiment, as if there stood before him, some thing peculiar, wonderful, darted through his soul. He had an impulse to turn around and start homeward, then he laughed at his own superstition and passed merrily and quickly over the last steps. Having greeted the hostess, he glanced around the room, and beheld a numerous company, among which were well-known countenances, and some also which were strange to him. The guests had divided into groups and were chatting with genuine French grace and vivacity, of the theater and literature, of political affairs and events of the day. Chopin, more inclined this evening to listen than to talk, seated himself in a corner of the drawing-room, and allowed the beautiful and brilliant forms—for many charming ladies met also at Countess C's—to pass before his eyes. When a part of the company had withdrawn, and only the more intimate friends of the Countess

C, remained, Chopin, now thoroughly in the mood to relate musical fairy-stories, seated himself at the piano and began to improvise. Breathlessly listened his hearers, whom he finally, completely sunk within himself, and looking only at the keys, had utterly forgotten. As he finished his improvisations, he raised his eyes and observed a plainly dressed lady, who, leaning upon the piano, appeared as if she would read his very soul with her dark, fiery eyes. Chopin felt that he blushed beneath the fascinating glance of the lady; she smiled a little, and as the artist arose from his seat, in order to withdraw from the company behind a cluster of Camelias, he heard the peculiar rustle of a silk dress from which emanated a fragrance of violets, and the same lady, who had regarded him so searchingly at the piano, approached, accompanied by Liszt. With deep, melodious voice she spoke to him; she said a few words about his playing, but more about the import of his improvisation. Frederic listened to her, moved and flattered. It is in truth the highest reward for the poet and artist, to know that he is understood, and while words of sparkling wit and indescribable poetry flowed from the eloquent lips of the lady, he felt himself understood as never before. This lady was then the most distinguished authoress of France, Aurora Dudevant, whose novels, which appeared under the name of Georges Sand, were of course not unknown to him. When Chopin entered his own room that night, the sweet speech of Georges Sand seemed still to be sounding in his ears, he seemed still to be gazing into her beaming eyes. But at this first meeting, she had impressed only his intellect, not his heart and aesthetic sense. He wrote to his parents at that time, concerning her: "I have become acquainted with a great and important celebrity, Madame Dudevant, known under the name of Georges Sand; but to me her face is unsympathetic and does not please me at all; there is even some thing repulsive in it to me." But Chopin met the gifted lady again; he forgot in her alluring conversation which almost always contained the most delicate flatteries for him, that she was not beautiful. Her love for him—for Georges Sand loved Chopin with passionate fervor—gave to her earnest, somewhat mas-

culine features a certain softness, which beautified them; her love made her shy, almost humble before him, and thus without knowing it, she touched his heart. At first, Frederic was grateful to the gifted woman for her love; later he loved her, perhaps not so passionately as she him, yet truly and earnestly. The wounds which Maria's faithlessness had inflicted upon his heart, healed over. The certainty that he was loved by the most celebrated authoress of France, a lady of European reputation, filled his soul with joyous pride. He felt now no longer alone, no longer homeless, for in Aurora he had not only a beloved but an intellectual and trustworthy friend, he had in her heart a home from which no stroke of fate could banish him.

He withdrew himself now more from large companies and spent the greatest part of the day only with his muse and a little circle of friends. Always choice in his association, he now grew still more so; but he always received his more intimate acquaintances with the best humor and Chopin-amiability.

Franz Liszt, Ferdinand Hiller and Baron von Stockhausen are perhaps the only surviving witnesses of these *soirées intimes* at Chopin's in the *Rue Chaussée d'Antin*.

Liszt writes of them thus: "Chopin's room was lighted only by a few wax tapers, which burned about those Pleyel-pianos, especially loved by the gifted artist, because of their subdued, silvery clearness of tone, and deep touch; these qualities allowed him to entice from the instrument sounds which seem to belong to one of those harmonicas which were monopolized by the romantic Germany and so ingeniously constructed by the old masters of that country—a wedding of glass to water. The dark quiet corners of the room seemed to rob it of all limits and to extend it into the darkness of empty space. In a dusky light a piece of furniture, clothed with a white covering, might be seen, as a vague shape rising like a phantom that came to listen to the tones which had conjured it up. The light concentrated about this piano fell upon the floor, gliding over it like a liquid wave, uniting with the flames of the hearth, which from time to time sent up red or golden sparks. A single form, that

of a pianist and sympathetic friend, seemed invited to be the constant listener to the tones gushing hither and thither, which sighing, rejoicing, roaring and murmuring, died away upon the waves of the instrument. By a clever freak of chance, the reflecting surface of the mirror threw back, in such a way as to double the image before our eyes, the beautiful oval face and the silken locks, which so many painters have copied, and which by means of steel-engravings, have been widely circulated for friends of the elegant works of the composer."

Among the guests in this room, were often found Heinrich Heine, the German poet, of whom Enault said: "Sarcasm has consumed his heart, and skepticism devoured his soul;" Meyerbeer, the composer of the greatest dramatic musical works of that period; Liszt, who amazed his hearers with his splendid, impassioned playing; the latter understood the soul of the Polish artist and afterward, with his pen raised a monument to his memory.

Ferdinand Hiller, who was at that time also a celebrated pianist, and entertained a cordial and sincere friendship for Chopin.*

Ary Schaffer, too, was there, the most classic among the painters of the romantic school, and Eugene Delacroix who sought in Chopin's bewitching music the harmony of colors.

There was Adolphe Nourrit, the celebrated singer, who afterward, in a fit of mental depression, put an end to his life; and Baron von Stockhausen, ambassador of the King of Hanover, to the French court, an admirer and pupil of Chopin. Besides these there was a small number of his countrymen, chief of whom was Niemcewicz, a venerable man, filled with a great longing for his Fatherland and cherishing now the one wish: to be able to rest from all sorrows beneath the sod of his native land. Mickiewicz, the greatest of Polish poets, dreaming ever of his beloved Lithuania, whose beauties he has sung in words worthy of a Homer; Mitwicki also, a favorite

*At the ceremonies in memory of Chopin which were held at Düsseldorf, November 3, 1849, Ferdinand Hiller commemorated the name of our artist in verses which gave evidence of deep feeling.

poet, Matuszynski, Fontana, Grzymala, and lastly Musset's "*la femme á l'oeil sombre*," who was later to poison the whole life of our artist, who could say as Musset with lacerated heart, of him: "*et si je ne crois plus aux larmes, c'est que je l'ai vu pleurer*." He alone who had seen Chopin in this society, as he received his guests with the perfect amiability of a Polish host, he who had been so fortunate as to hear his improvisations, could say that he had really known him. A confidential conversation in his small circle of friends often put him in the best humor. Frequently he was as joyous as in his early youth, when happy in the paternal home he had learned nothing yet of the cares and sternness of life. Chopin did not willingly sacrifice his time to others, but he did it wholly, if at all. If a friend of his youth, or a companion from Warsaw visited him, he at once excused himself to his pupils and cheerfully sacrificed the day to him who had come in quest of him.

Ordering a carriage he would drive, with his guests to the boulevard for breakfast, then to the suburbs of Paris (generally to Montmorenci), etc. When they had spent a few hours in innocent enjoyment in the open air, they returned to Paris, dined at one of the first restaurants, and ended their day in a theater, going also, sometimes, after the theater, to supper, or to a place of amusement where entertainment and pretty *danseuses* were not lacking. On such a day Frederic was the *Amphitryon* of his guests, and never allowed them to pay for any thing.

Such a life of utter unrest as this in Paris was necessarily injurious to Chopin's constitution, which was naturally delicate. In the autumn of 1837 he was attacked, for the first time, by an affection of the lungs, which greatly exhausted his strength.*

His friends and physicians became anxious about his health, and urged him to spend some time in Southern France. It was generally believed that his lungs were diseased.

Georges Sand intended to go to the Island of Majorca for the sake

*In the same year Chopin made a short visit to London, in order to divert his mind. Camillo Pleyel and Stanislaus Kozmian accompanied him.

of her son Maurice, and induced Chopin to join them. It was very hard for Chopin to leave Paris, to separate from his physician, his friends, his piano. An unwillingness to tear himself away from endeared habits lay implanted in his nature. Every change excited him; but he was unable to answer "no" to the entreaty of the woman whom he so highly esteemed. This journey, which did not seem advisable to his friends, was not, however, fatiguing to Frederic. During the sea-voyage to Barcelona, as also to Palma, he was quite well; but immediately after landing, in November, 1838, he became dangerously ill. The dampness and penetrating cold of the house in which he had at first taken apartments, brought on a violent cough, and now the new-comers were regarded with such open opposition by the occupants of the house that they hastened to leave it. In Majorca consumption is considered as contagious as cholera and the plague. No one would have the sick man near him. They finally found shelter in a very remote Carthusian monastery, called "Waldemosa," which had just been deserted by the monks. This cloister lay in a charming ravine, surrounded by orange trees; but of course there was no trace of any comfort in the building. Furniture was entirely lacking, and, added to this, the winter of that year was terribly severe. It rained forty days without intermission, frequently even snow fell. This decided Chopin to order a stove and a piano from Marseilles; but, as he wrote to his parents, he was obliged to wait a very long time for the arrival of these things.

The piano and stove finally came, throwing the authorities and inhabitants of Palma into great excitement, for they imagined that these objects, entirely unknown to them, were infernal machines, designed to blow up the whole city. The sojourn on Majorca did not, alas, bring the desired restoration to our artist. He became visibly thinner and paler from day to day. Almost all the physicians gave him up, although his disease did not appear to be chronic. He was prepared for the worst. The last physician whom he had consulted did not perfectly apprehend his disease, and failed, therefore, to use the proper remedies to overcome it; bron-

chitis had resulted in a nervous irritation, which the physicians regarded as the first stage of consumption, not having observed the symptoms which indicated the contrary. He ordered a strict regimen, bleeding and milk-diet. These remedies were incompatible with the nature of the disease, and the loss of blood might have had the very worst consequences. Frederic's sufferings became daily greater. The physician insisted continually upon bleeding, but the inward voice of his friend, who nursed him with the greatest solicitude, told her, "This will kill him." It was soon manifest that this voice had been that of Providence. The milk-diet proved injudicious in the end. There was no cow in the neighborhood, and he could not drink the goats' milk which was brought to him.

"The poor, great artist! It was sometimes difficult to manage him," says Georges Sand.* What I feared, alas, happened: He had completely lost patience. He bore physical pain like a man; but he was not able always to curb his restless imagination. The monastery appeared to him to be a place filled with spirits and ghosts, and these fancies tortured him more than his bodily sufferings. He endeavored to conceal from us what was torturing him, but we soon discovered it. As I returned one evening, with my children, perhaps about ten o'clock, from a visit to the cloister-ruins, we found Chopin at the piano. His looks were wild, his hair stood on end, and some seconds passed before he recognized us. Then he forced a smile and began to play for us. Demoniacal thoughts were they, in some measure, which, during the short time of his loneliness and discontent, had possessed him without his willing it. He wrote in this monastery the most beautiful musical compositions under the title, "Preludes." These are true masterpieces. Some of them make so deep an impression upon the hearer, that he believes he sees before him the shadows of the dead monks and the pomp of the solemn and somber funeral rites. Others are full of grace and melancholy, glowing with the quivering flames of inspiration, breathing the green hope of returning health. When the laugh of

*"Histoire de ma vie," Vol. XIII, chapters 6 and 7: Paris 1855.

the children, playing before him, the distant sound of a guitar, the twittering of the birds, which were rocked to and fro upon the wet branches, broke upon his ear, or when the tiny, pale roses in our cloister-garden pushed their little heads up from beneath the snow and attracted his eye, then melodies of indescribable sweetness and grace arose in his soul; but many are so full of dreary sadness, that although we may be enraptured while listening to them, they yet fill us with pain. Above all, I may say this of a prelude which he wrote in one evening.* It so takes possession of one, that it drives the soul almost to despair. One day Maurice and I had gone to Palma to attend to some necessary business. We had left Chopin comparatively well. There fell, toward evening, a heavy rain; the streams were so swollen that we lost our boots in the flood; the guide had forsaken us and we were exposed to great danger. In six hours we were scarcely able to travel one mile and a half. Finally, about midnight, we reached home. Our delay was exceedingly unpleasant to us, for we knew that it would greatly disturb our dear invalid. The excitement in which we found him was indeed very great. It had already given place to a silent despair. He had composed this sublimely beautiful prelude, with tears in his eyes. When he saw us coming, he arose with a shriek, remained standing almost motionless, and with a strange, hollow voice cried out, "O, I thought you were no longer alive!" As he gradually became more composed, and saw our drenched and ruined clothes, the thought of the danger in which we had been, increased his illness. He related to us afterward, that during our absence he had had a vision, and that he was not able to separate the dream from the reality. He sank into a kind of trance, and while he was playing on the piano, he thought he had disappeared from the earth, and that he was no longer among the living. It seemed to him that he was drowned, lying at the bottom of the sea, and feeling the cold drops of water falling in measured time upon his breast. "When I," continues Georges Sand, "directed Chopin's attention to

*No. 6. B minor.

the rain-drops falling measuredly upon the roof, he perversely maintained that he had not heard them at all before. He became angry when I used the expression, "*harmonie imitative*," and he was right, since imitation would be nonsense which could only divert the ear. Chopin's genius possessed an inborn, secret harmony, which gave expression to his musical thoughts—not through the material reproduction of outward sounds, but through the harmonious evenness of tones. The prelude which he composed this evening, really recalls the rain-drops which were falling upon the roof of the cloister; but according to his interpretation these drops indicated the tears which were falling from heaven upon his heart.

Until now, a genius such as Chopin's, so full of deep, poetic sentiment, has not re-appeared. Beneath his hand the piano spoke the language of the Infinite. A little piece of scarcely half a page contained the sublimest poems. Chopin never needed great material means to reveal the richness of his genius. No; he needed no trombones and ophicleides in order to fill the soul with affright; he awakened faith and inspiration without these instruments. Hitherto he has not been known, and even to-day he is, in general, not sufficiently appreciated. Great advancement must be made in taste and in the understanding of music before the works of Chopin can become popular. Chopin felt his power and his weakness. The latter sprang from the surplus of power which he knew not how to control. He could not, like Mozart—who alone could do this—create masterpieces from ordinary notes. In Chopin's compositions we find many surprising things and delicate embellishments. Sometimes, albeit rarely, they are mysteriously peculiar, and never far-fetched or diffusive. Although he hated and shunned every thing unintelligible, yet his very great intensity of feeling lifted him sometimes, without his knowledge, into spheres which were accessible only to him. I fear that I was often a poor judge for him, as he had the habit of asking my advice, as Moliere that of his cook; for when I had come to know Chopin intimately, I understood his nature quite clearly. During the eight years, in which I grew more and more familiar with his musical thoughts, and

learned to penetrate his character, I found in his playing either the conflict, the victory, or the pain of the thoughts which were controlling him. At that time I understood him as he understood himself. A judge less intimately connected with him might, perhaps, have advised him to express himself more clearly in his music. In his youth he often had very merry and witty ideas. Of this, his Polish songs, distinguished by simplicity and extraordinary loveliness, give evidence. One is sometimes reminded by some of his later compositions, of sparkling crystal fountains, in which sunbeams are mirrored.

The song of the lark, as it soars with easy flight into the ether, or the gentle gliding of the swan on the smooth mirror-like surface of the water, resemble the more tranquil compositions of Chopin, which remind one of the sacred stillness of nature. Chopin was sometimes filled with anxiety. The piercing shriek of the famished eagle upon the cliffs of Majorca, the frightful moaning of the storm and the dreary stillness of the snow-covered heights, awakened dismal fancies in his soul. How little delight did the fragrant orange-flowers, the vine, bent to the earth by its load of grapes, or the Moorish song of the peasants laboring in the field, bring to him. The utterly insignificant annoyances of daily life disturbed him to an extraordinary degree; but what is still more singular, actual sorrow never tortured him so much as vexation at these worthless trifles. He could not conquer these weaknesses of character. The degree of his excitement often sustained no relation to its cause. He bore the sad condition of his health with heroism and composure. Real danger did not terrify him. But he tortured himself, without ground, with gloomy thoughts, as imaginative men who are very nervous often do. This excessive attention to trifles, the unconquerable aversion to every thing which gave a hint of poverty, his luxurious habits, made the residence at Majorca, after a few days of illness, repugnant to him. But his condition forbade all traveling. When, finally, he had somewhat recovered, unfavorable winds arose, and the vessel was obliged to lie at anchor three weeks. This was the only

means of return, and we could, unfortunately, make no use of it. Our stay in the cloister-ruins became a torture to Chopin and a heavy burden to me. However affable, charming and merry he was in society, he was yet often so gloomy and capricious toward those most intimately surrounding him, that he could drive them almost to despair. I have never known any one whose character was so noble, tender and free from selfishness. As a friend, he was true and just. In more cheerful moments his brilliant wit surpassed often the cleverest remarks of the most distinguished persons. Concerning matters which he thoroughly understood, his judgment was excellent, so that in this respect no one could cope with him. But on the other hand, rarely was the humor of any man so whimsical and irritable, and the imaginative power of any one so inexhaustible as Chopin's. But who could find fault with the gifted artist for this? The cause of his many peculiarities lay plainly in his malady. A broken rose-leaf, the shadow of a flying beetle, would sometimes produce the same effect on him as if a glowing iron had been laid upon him, or his blood had been drawn. He found only myself and my children agreeable. All else under the southern heavens appeared intolerable to him. He was consumed more by impatience at the delayed journey than by vexation at the absence of comforts. Finally, at the end of the winter, we were able to travel to Barcelona and thence to Marseilles.

When Georges Sand, with her children and Chopin, landed in this city, our artist learned that a mass was about to be performed for Adolphe Nourrit, this celebrated singer having a short time before, in a fit of insanity, taken his own life.*

Chopin hastened at once into the church, and, during the service, seated himself at the organ and played the last of his improvisations as a tribute to his departed friend.

*Adolphe Nourrit, the greatest tenor of his age, born March 3, 1802, at Montpellier, threw himself from a window in Naples, March 8, 1839, because he imagined that he received less applause than formerly.

CHAPTER V.

RETURN TO PARIS—MOSCHELES—LISZT—CHOPIN AS PIANIST.

AT Nohant, the country-seat of Madame Georges Sand, Chopin rested, happy and unusually well, through a beautiful summer, returning in the autumn to Paris, where, although not completely restored, he was yet so far invigorated as to be able to resume his ordinary activity. It was found that the physicians had erred. What they had supposed to be a pulmonary affection proved to be inflammation of the throat. They earnestly advised the artist, therefore, to guard himself carefully in all respects and to lead the most regular life. A tender mother or sister, a loving and beloved wife, would certainly have succeeded in inducing the pliable and gentle-hearted Frederic to have more consideration for his frail constitution, and to lead a regular life; but in Paris, accustomed to spend every evening in companies, which were protracted until late into the night, he could not prevail upon himself to remain at home and betake himself early to rest. This exciting life, unfortunately, injured him. The first symptoms of consumption showed themselves, making greater progress from year to year. Chopin lived at first in the *Rue Tronchet*, but soon he moved to the *Quai d'Orleans*, in the pavilion of a house which Georges Sand occupied. "Chopin was well content that he had a *salon* in which he might play and dream," says Georges Sand. "He loved society and used his drawing-room only when he gave lessons. He composed only at Nohant."

Upon his arrival he was greeted with great joy by his pupils, who were delighted with the preludes and a number of new compositions which he brought with him.*

*These compositions are: Two Impromptus, op. 36; two Nocturnes, op. 37; Scherzo (C minor), op. 39; two Polonaises, op. 40; four Mazourkas, op. 41; Waltz, op. 42; Tarentelle, op. 43. etc.

In the year 1839 Moscheles came from London to Paris. He had long wished to become acquainted with the Polish musician. At an evening company at Mr. Leo's, to whom Chopin dedicated the Polonaise, op. 53, the artists met for the first time. As perfect men of the world, they greeted each other with the greatest courtesy, without, however, approaching each other any more cordially. A short time after this first meeting, both were invited by King Louis Phillippe to a court-concert at St. Cloud, on the 29th of November. Chopin played before the royal family, first a nocturne, then *Etudes*, "and," as Moscheles says, "was admired and caressed as a favorite." The German artist then played some salon-pieces, and, finally, his four-handed sonata, with Chopin. Moscheles found Chopin's playing full of charm and animation. In a letter which he wrote at that time to his wife, he says: "Chopin's appearance is completely identified with his music. Both are delicate and enthusiastic. At my request he played for me, and now for the first time do I understand his music; and the excessive enthusiasm of the women also becomes clear to me. His *ad libitum* playing, which, in the interpreters of his music degenerates into reckless regard of time, is in him only the most charming originality of rendering. The dilettant, harsh modulations, which I can not get over easily when I play his compositions, no longer shock me because his slender fingers glide, elf-like, lightly over them. His *piano* is given with such lightness that no powerful *forte* is needed to produce the wished-for contrasts. Thus one does not miss the orchestral effects which the German school demands of a pianist, but allows himself to be carried away, as by a singer, who, little concerned about the accompaniment, follows only his feelings. Enough; he is unique in the world of pianists. He declared that he likes my music. At all events he is thoroughly acquainted with it. He played *Etudes* and his last production, "Preludes," for me. I played many of my compositions for him. But who would have believed that Chopin, with his morbid sensibility, possessed also a comical vein? He was quick, mirthful, even exceedingly comical

in his imitations of Pixis, Liszt, and a hunch-backed amateur pianist."

Chopin's talent for mimicry was displayed, as the reader already knows, even in his early youth. It afterward developed so much that the French actors of that period, as for instance, Boccage and Madame Dorval, declared that they had never yet seen any thing of this kind so excellent.

My friend, Joseph Nowakowski, a fellow-student of Chopin, related to me the following little anecdote: When I visited Chopin in Paris, I asked him to contrive means for my acquaintance with Kalkbrenner, Liszt, and Pixis. "That is not necessary," answered Chopin. "Wait a moment; I will show them to you; but each one separately." Hereupon he seated himself at the piano, assumed Liszt's posture, played as he, and imitated his mimics and gestures perfectly; then he assumed another *role* and mimicked Pixis. I went the next evening with Chopin to the theater. He left the loge for a short time; I turned around and saw Pixis sitting beside me, thinking him to be Chopin. I clapped him familiarly on the shoulder and laughingly said: "Stop your mimicry!" My neighbor, greatly astonished by the boldness of the unknown man, did not know what to think. Fortunately, at this moment, Chopin returned to the loge, and laughed heartily when he perceived the comical mistake. With the grace peculiar to him, he knew how to excuse himself and me to the real Pixis. Liszt was often with Chopin in Parisian society, and was a witness of the latter's talent for mimicry. He looked on quietly as the wanton Chopin imitated him, not in the least offended. On the contrary, he smiled and appeared to be really amused by it. Not the least jealousy prevailed between these two artists. They remained always upon friendly terms with each other. Once Chopin was asked in a company to play one of his last compositions. Liszt also united his request with those of the others. As Chopin was about to seat himself at the piano, he noticed that the pedals were missing. The hostess remembered that they had been sent away to be repaired, and had not yet been brought back. When Liszt heard this he

laughingly exclaimed that they should at once be replaced, and that, too, by himself. He actually crept under the piano, and kneeling during Chopin's playing, he performed perfectly the functions of the pedals.*

A few years afterward, in June, 1843, a great number of artists had assembled at Nohant. Among these, Liszt again was there, the celebrated Pauline Viardot-Garcia, whose unsurpassable talent for ideal expression made her one of the best interpreters of Chopin's Polish songs, the painter, Eugene Delacroix; several very eminent actors and distinguished personages in the literary world; the hostess, her son, her daughter and some married couples from the neighborhood, completed the company. All were still at that age when one is filled with enthusiasm for art, and full of hope. One evening when the whole company was assembled in the parlor, Liszt played one of Chopin's nocturnes, but allowed himself some embellishments. Chopin's delicate, intelligent countenance still showed the traces of the sickness from which he had recently recovered, and betrayed uneasiness. Finally, he was no longer able to control himself, and said to Liszt, with the composure peculiar to him at times, "I pray you, dear friend, when you do me the honor to play my compositions, either play them as they are written, or play something else." "Well, then, play yourself," answered Liszt, somewhat piqued, and arose from the piano.

"Very willingly," said Chopin.

At the same instant a moth fell into the lamp and extinguished it. They were about to relight it, when Chopin cried, "No; on the contrary, put out all the lamps; the light of the moon is quite sufficient." Then he began to improvise, and played almost a whole hour. But how? That is not to be told, for the feelings which Chopin's magical hands evoked can not be portrayed in words. When he left the piano, tears glistened in the eyes of his hearers. Even Liszt was deeply moved and embraced Chopin, saying, "Aye, my friend, you were right. Works of such genius as yours should

*Chopin sent an account of this incident from Paris to his parents, unfortunately, in one of the letters which were destroyed, but which I, myself, have read.

not be tampered with. Every arbitrary change is only an injury to them. You are a true poet."

"Oh, that is not it," answered Chopin quickly. "Each of us possesses his own style. In that lies the whole difference between us two. You, yourself, know quite well that no one in the world plays Beethoven and Weber better than you. I entreat you to play the Adagio from the C-sharp major sonata of Beethoven for us; but properly, and as you can play it when you wish." Liszt began to play the Adagio. Agitation was again apparent among the listeners, but of quite a different kind. There was weeping, too, but not such sweet tears as, plainly, only Chopin knew how to draw forth. Liszt's playing was less elegiac, but on that account, so much the more dramatic. "A few days afterward," relates Charles Rollinat, in the journal "*Le Temps*," "we were again assembled as guests in the drawing-room of Madame Sand. Liszt asked Chopin to play. The latter had to be coaxed a little, but finally complied. Liszt now requested all the lights to be put out and the window curtains to be closed, that it might be perfectly dark. The artist's wish was granted. At the moment when Chopin sat down to play, Liszt whispered something in his ear, and took his seat at the piano. Chopin withdrew a little and seated himself in the first convenient arm-chair, not anticipating the design of his friend. Liszt began to improvise nearly in the same manner as Chopin on the former evening, and truly with such faithfulness in respect to sentiment and peculiarity of style that it was impossible not to be deceived. The same signs of commotion were apparent among the hearers. When the enthusiasm had risen to the highest pitch, Liszt lighted the lamps which were on the piano. A general exclamation of astonishment resounded from the audience.

"What! Is that you?"

"As you see," laughed Liszt.

"But we were almost certain that Chopin was playing!"

In this witty manner had Liszt avenged himself against his dangerous rival.

Sometimes, also, comedy was played, or improvisations originated,

promptly and poetically, as all true improvisations must. There was a fine theater and a great choice of costumes at the castle of Madame Sand. Only the subject of the play and the distribution of the scenes were given. The performers had to improvise the dialogue. Liszt and Chopin constituted the orchestra. At two pianos, placed at the right and left of the stage, and concealed by drapery, sat the artists, following the play and improvising appropriate music. Both masters, gifted with an astonishing memory, which kept stored up in their minds all the Italian, German, and French operas of any importance, comprehended with admirable quickness the motive which corresponded with the situation, and rendered it with such fire and flourish that the actors, who, on their side, were performing in the most deserving way, cried out from the stage, "Enough, enough! Too many beauties are being scattered hither and thither." In the middle of the garden there was an esplanade which overlooked the whole valley. A table, some iron benches and easy garden-chairs, invited one to repose. The esplanade was surrounded by an iron railing, that the children who came thither to play, might not fall into the brook which flowed by. The place was known for its wonderful echoes, which repeated every word three or four times with perfect distinctness. The children often amused themselves by making the echo (as they said) speak. One evening the thought occurred to some one to have the piano carried to this place and make the echo repeat some fragments of romantic music. This idea was received with great applause, and the magnificent Erard instrument was brought to the esplanade. It was a mild June night. The moon was hidden, but the heavens were strewn with innumerable stars, whose rays took the place of the moon's silver light. The air was clear and still. The piano was opened upon the side toward the valley, and Liszt, with his powerful hands, played first, the well-known hunter-chorus from "Euryanthe," he stopped, of course, at each pause to await the answer of the echo. We were all seized, even at the first pause, by a thrill of enthusiasm. There was a lofty, indescribable poesy in this playing with the response which nature here gave to art. The musical phrase

was too long for the first and second echoes to be distinctly repeated; but the third and fourth time, that is, the echo of the echo in the chorus, the echo was sweetly repeated, while not one note was missing. Liszt, himself carried away, accelerated the time. Every phrase was the occasion of the most exciting curiosity—the most intense expectancy. The one before the last, especially, shot with awfully beautiful resound through the tops of the trees into the valley; but the last announced the victory of the human will over the obstacles which nature opposed to it. After this great artistically-executed fanfare, Chopin took Liszt's place and made the echo sing and lament at his bidding. He was composing at that time an impromptu, and played for the first time some fragments from it. This pellucid music, which resembled the sounds of an Æolian harp, made Chopin beside himself. He protracted far longer than Liszt his communion with the spirits of the valley. Between them it was a strange dialogue; a whispering and murmuring like unto a magical song. The hostess was obliged to draw him away by force from the piano. He fell into almost feverish excitement.

When Chopin had ended his playing, Pauline Garcia sang the tender, naive romanza, "*Nel cor piu non mi sento.*" This musical fragment was an excellent choice, for each phrase consists only of two notes, which the echo repeated with a clearness that enraptured us all. Aurora already showed the border of her rosy veil when the company broke up. Each one carried the most beautiful impression away with him, and has certainly preserved an inextinguishable remembrance of the night. Afterward, as it is wont to happen in life, this warm friendship which united Liszt and Chopin, greatly cooled, and is said to have been finally quite dissolved. Who was to be blamed? I do not venture to judge. But certain it is that Chopin afterward complained bitterly of Liszt in letters to his parents. After Frederic had discontinued his appearances in public, he employed himself in Paris in giving lessons. The nobility and elegance of his personal appearance, the greatness of his talent, his brilliant reputation, and the gift to instruct, made him much

sought after, and highly valued as a teacher, by those especially who belonged to the higher circles of society.

In the selection of his pupils he always gave the preference to his countrymen, and he has educated many ladies who have more or less adopted his style and manner. Among these are especially worthy of mention, the Princess Maralline Czartoryska, *née* Radziwill, the Countess Pauline Plater, Countess L. Czosnowska, Countess Delphine Potocka, Princess Beauvan, Madame Rosengart-Zaleska, Emilie Hofman, Baroness Bronicka, etc.

Among those not of Polish descent may be mentioned Madame Kalerzi, *nee* Countess Nesselrode, afterward Madame von Muchanoff, Misses Emma and Laura Harsford, Fräulein Caroline Hartmann, Fräulein Lina Treppa, Countess Flahault, Baroness C. von Rothschild, Miss J. W. Stirling, Mademoiselle de Noailles, Mademoiselle L. Duperre, Fräulein R. von Konneritz, Princess Elizabeth Czernicheff, Countess von Agoult, Princess C. von Souzzo, Countess von Appony, Baroness von Est, Fräulein J. von Caraman. Miss C. Maberiy, Countess von Perthius, Countess von Loban, Countess Adele von Ferstenstein, and Fräulein F. Müller, to whom Chopin dedicated his Allegro de Concert, op. 46, and who is regarded by many as his most gifted and favorite pupil.

Chopin was far from showing, like other great artists, dislike and even repugnance to lesson-giving. He even found in this laborious employment, a certain pleasure of which he made no secret, if only he discovered talent and industry in his pupils. He reproved, it is true, the slightest mistake, but always most kindly and in a manner to encourage the pupil. Only in later days, when his nerves were irritated to the uttermost by increasing disease, did he become angry, generally with pupils who were slow to comprehend. Then he threw the notes from the stand and the pupils were obliged to listen to bitter words. Chopin's apparently weak hand has not only broken in pieces pencils, but chairs, also. But the outburst of passion did not last long. A tear in the eye of the up-braided pupil could appease the anger of the master at once, and his kind heart was troubled to make amends for the wrong. His

nerves were especially sensitive to a hard touch. Once when he was giving a lesson he heard such harsh tones, that he sprang up, crying out, "What is that—did a dog bark?" The great delicacy of his nerves was the reason that there was not the power in his touch which other pianists, especially Liszt, possess.

On this account the first lessons with Chopin were a real torture to his pupils. He blamed most the too heavy touch. He himself had thin, delicate fingers, which lay horizontally upon the keys, so that he appeared rather to be caressing than striking them. Nevertheless, he was able to draw powerful and solid tones from the instrument. They greatly err who believe that his playing was always tender and delicate. Later, when he lacked physical strength to bring out energetic passages, his execution lost in effect, through the need of contrasts; but in his youth he possessed sufficient power and fire in playing, without at any time misusing the one or the other. Moscheles says in 1839, of his performance at a *soirée* at the court of King Louis Phillippe: "Chopin's inspiration, which breathed through the whole piece, must, I think, have inflamed his hearers."

Every pupil who came to him was obliged to be educated to a certain degree in *technique*. Notwithstanding this, they were compelled to begin with Clementi's "*Gradus ad Parnassum*." We see from this that the chief aim of his method was the cultivation of the touch. The minute seeking out of technical difficulties, in which modern masters of the piano vie with each other, has so raised the demands of the present, that the former apply their whole time to the attainment of extraordinary skillfulness and prodigious power. They thereby frequently lose softness and lightness of touch, and neglect to give sufficient care to delicate shading and artistical finish and phrasing of the melodies.

The second demand which Chopin made in the beginning of instruction, was the complete freedom of the fingers. He, therefore, required unconditionally from his pupils, that they practice exercises, and chiefly the scales, major and minor, from *piano* to *fortissimo*, in *staccato* and *legato*. Added to this was the variation in accent,

once upon the second, then upon the third or fourth note. In this way he attained the thoroughly necessary freedom of the fingers and smoothness and delicacy of touch.

Chopin intended to arrange in a theoretical work his studies and reflections upon the nature of piano-playing, the fruits of long years of experience and observation during his artistic career, but he had written only a few pages when he was taken sick. He unfortunately destroyed this manuscript a short time before his death. Every poetic musical composition is the revelation of the beautiful, and the player ought to recognize and reproduce it as much as he can in the spirit of the composer. Chopin was often asked for advice, and his answer always was, "Play as you feel, and you will always play well." When he once heard rigid, unfeeling, purely mechanical tones produced beneath the hands of a pupil, he exclaimed, excitedly, "Put your whole soul into that!" His friends used to relate that he greatly pitied one of his pupils who was diligent, indefatigable and persevering in study and possessed all the qualities to become an artist of the first rank, but who was wanting in the chief prerequisite to become an artist, namely, expression of feeling.

"Play as you feel!" How often, in musical performance, does this principle, so simple and so true, lead astray! How many pianists there are, of great reputation, who, in the rendering of Chopin's works, exaggerate or misunderstand their import. This principle of Chopin proves to be, then, only infallible and a safe guide in the performance of musical works, when the player is capable of understanding the object and intentions of the composer. This is, unfortunately, a rare gift, and the absence of it in the rendering of Chopin's music, is painfully felt in a two-fold degree. The master himself felt this, and when any one of his French pupils played his compositions and was overwhelmed with praise by those who heard him, Chopin would frequently say that he had gone through it all well, but he had missed the Polish element and Polish inspiration. He expressed this opinion, not only after listening to compositions whose title is of Polish origin, as for ex-

ample, mazourkas and polonaises, but also of his concertos, nocturnes, ballads, and études.

La Mara* is not wrong when she asserts that the true rendering of his works belongs to the number of rare phenomena. He who can not himself feel the heavy sorrows which the Polish people has endured and must still endure, who does not understand the melancholy peculiar to the whole nation, he, be he the greatest pianist, can not faithfully interpret Chopin.

In the year 1833 or 1834, there met one evening in the house of the Castellan Count Plater, three great artists: Liszt, Hiller, and Chopin. The conversation turned with much animation upon national music. Chopin declared that he who was not born in Poland, and had not inhaled the fragrance of its meadows and fields, could not have the right feeling for, nor apprehension of, this Folk-music. It was proposed, as an example, to play the well-known mazourka, "*Poland Is not yet Lost.*" Liszt first seated himself at the piano. After him Hiller played the piece. Each one had apprehended it differently, and consequently performed it differently. Chopin played this mazourka last, and when he had ended, both rivals were forced to confess that they had been very far from apprehending the spirit of the mazourka as he himself.

The interest in Chopin's peculiar compositions is increasing, it is true, but the number of his interpreters who fully comprehend him, is comparatively small. One observes a certain affectation and coquetry in the performance of some, others bring out only the poetic enthusiasm, which is expressed in most of his compositions, while others, again, seek to produce effect by glaring contrasts, and attach the chief value to that. These apparent contradictions will rarely be united in performance, and yet only when they are united, will they bear the true stamp of Chopin's genius. As the best means to secure naturalness in execution, our master earnestly recommended the frequent hearing of Italian

*Musicalische Studienkoepfe. Leipzig, 1868.

singers, among whom there were, at that time, very notable artists in Paris. Their free and simple style, the ease with which they used their voice, knowing how, by this very means, to preserve it well, were always placed by him as an example for pianists, as in general, for every one who wishes to play an instrument well. He advised his pupils not to break up musical thoughts, but to perform them in a flowing manner. He liked, in the player, what one understands in the singer by "*portamento*." Exaggeration in accent was odious to him. It robbed playing of its poetry and gave it a certain didactic pedantry. The touch of Chopin's fingers, which were soft as satin, produced the most delicate, the most exquisite effect. No other pianist of his age possessed his execution and delicate taste, and the embellishments, which, at appropriate passages, he interwove in his playing were often compared with filagree-work, or with the most delicate web of Brabant lace.

When he was alone, or when his favorite pupils were with him, he played with singular pleasure, Sebastian Bach, whose works he had studied with the greatest accuracy, and had made them his own.*

An especial peculiarity of his playing was the *tempo rubato*. The bass he kept in quiet, measured tempo, while the right hand moved wholly untrammelled by time, now following the left hand, now (if for example, it had to execute quavers in triplets, or the Chopin-like, peculiar, rhythmical, by no means too broken runs and embellishments, against a simple, continuous quavering movement of the left hand) going quite independently its own way. "The left hand," he said, "should be like a capellmeister. It dare not for a moment become uncertain and wavering."

In this way his playing was free from the fetters of time, and gained its peculiar charm. The outlines fade away—as we see upon

*Chopin was once asked by Lenz: "Do you study as the concert-day draws near?"

"This is a frightful time for me," he replied. "I dislike publicity, but it belongs to my position. For two weeks I shut myself up and play Bach. That is my preparation. I do not practice my own compositions."

a skillfully painted winter-landscape—into transparent mist. He applied the *tempo rubato* with great success, not only to his Nocturnes and Berceuse, but also to many mazourkas. It will not be difficult for him who is permeated with the spirit of Chopin's creations, to understand to which passages of his works the "rubato" is applicable. The gifted artist rendered the trill enchantingly in his playing, while he continually allowed the melody to fluctuate like a boat on the mighty surface of the sea. Liszt says, Chopin was the first who employed this style in his compositions, which left its peculiar stamp upon his rendering of musical compositions. We mean by this the *tempo rubato*. A vanishing, irregularly interrupted time, pliant, at once abrupt and languishing, flickering like the flame beneath the rushing current of air. Later, he was no longer wont to mark this tempo in the publication of his musical works, convinced that he who possesses an understanding of them in general, will, of himself, discover this law of unrestraint.

All of Chopin's compositions ought to be played with that kind of accented, prosodical, rocking movement, the secret of which can be solved only with difficulty, if one had not frequent opportunity to hear him himself play. He appeared eagerly intent to teach this manner of playing to his pupils, but especially to his countrymen, to whom he wished more than to all others, to interpret his manner and style. His Polish pupils—but still more, his Polish lady pupils—acquired this method, with the aptitude which they possessed for all objects of poetic sentiment, and with an intuitive comprehension of his thoughts, they were enabled to follow him faithfully through all the surgings of that azure sea of feeling. So long as Chopin was well and strong, which was the case during the first years of his residence in Paris, he played the Erard instrument. But after his friend Camillo Pleyel had sent him from his manufactory, a magnificent grand-piano, which was distinguished by its metallic sound and an especially easy touch, he played only instruments of this manufacture. If he were expected to lend brilliance to a *soirée*, whether in a Polish or French house, he would often send his own piano, if there were no Pleyel instrument where

he had promised to play." *Quand je suis mal dispose,*" said Chopin, "*je joue sur un piano d'Erard et j'y trouve facilement un son fait. Mais quand je me sens en verve et assez fort, pour trouver mon propre son a moi, il me faut un piano de Pleyel.*"

Art was held sacred by Chopin, as the most beautiful gift of heaven, as a gentle consoler in sorrow. He would never have employed it for the attainment of ordinary ends. Unhappily there are celebrated artists enough to whom the exercise of their art is nothing else than the means to gain a great fortune. What Schiller says of scientific men applies also to artists: "To the one she is the exalted, the heavenly goddess; to the other, the valuable cow which supplies him with butter." For Frederic Chopin art was, until death closed his beautiful, poetical eyes, the exalted goddess. Often persons of wealth and high position came to him, wishing to have him as teacher for themselves or their relatives; but although Chopin had long ago ceased to receive assistance from home, although he was very susceptible to pleasant home-like influences, gladly bestowed gifts upon, and practiced the most generous hospitality for those whom he liked. Yet even the highest fees could not induce him to give lessons to any one without talent. Courteously—for with Chopin it could not be otherwise—he expressed his view in such a case, and declined to increase the number of his pupils. On the contrary, he encouraged young talent with genuine kindness. To such, he lent with pleasure, books, music, and sometimes even money, if he discovered that their means were limited, and also gave instruction to many without accepting compensation for it. One of his most able pupils was young Filtsch, an Hungarian. Chopin esteemed him highly, and always liked to see him at his house. Death called him away early from the earth, and his loss made a deep and painful impression upon his master.

Every one who had known Filtsch* intimately, and had heard

*Liszt is reported to have said of this young and gifted man: "When the little fellow begins his tours, I will shut up shop." See "*The Great Pianists of Our Time*," by Lenz.

his beautiful playing, said that he had justified the most brilliant hopes, and his early death was a severe loss to the musical world.

Among Chopin's best pupils must also be numbered Gutmann, Guntsberg, Telefsen, Georg Mathias, who is now professor in the Paris Conservatory; Carl Mikuli, Director of the Musical Union in Lemberg; Casimir Wernik, who died at an early age, in 1859, at Petersburg; and Gustav Schumann, a highly esteemed pianist, living in Berlin, who resided for some time in Paris, solely for the purpose of receiving instruction from Chopin. Chopin was not only respected but beloved by all his pupils, for he had heartfelt sympathy with each one, and generally in his manner there was something unusually attractive. Toward young artists who came from Poland, his conduct was especially kindly. He was ready for every service, and proved that he still loved his native country as warmly as in the time when his Polish paternal home was the whole world of the dreamy, loving boy. Thus it happened that many who were staying only for a short time in Paris, and wishing to obtain reputation and popularity, represented themselves as his pupils, even when they were not at all acquainted with him. If Chopin were asked if this or that one was his pupil, he replied, "I have not given him lessons, but if it can be any advantage to him to pass as my pupil, leave him in peace—let him be such." But Chopin was not only a kind, he was also a conscientious teacher. Out of regard for his health he never gave more than four, at the very highest, five lessons; but these he gave punctually; only when acquaintances or friends from Poland visited him, or when he was sick, did he excuse himself to his pupils. On account of the great distances, carriages were frequently sent for him; but in the last years of his life, his pupils were obliged to come to him. Finally, when he became so feeble that he could sit up only with difficulty, he gave lessons lying upon the sofa, a small piano before him, while the pupil took his or her place at the second instrument. When a passage was executed falsely or not, according to his taste, he arose, played it and then laid down again. His noble character, his pure artistic spirit, continually showed itself every-where.

Indicative of his noble disposition is, for example, the following partially known little episode: Julius Schulhoff came to Paris when quite a young man and wholly unknown. He heard there that Chopin was to come to Mercier's piano-forte manufactory* to inspect a newly-invented *transpositeur*. This was in the year 1844. Schulhoff seized this opportunity to become personally acquainted with Chopin, and joined the little circle which awaited him. The latter appeared with an old friend, a Russian capell-meister. Taking advantage of a favorable moment, Schulhoff obtained an introduction to him from a lady who was present. When the latter desired that Schulhoff might be allowed to play something for him, the celebrated artist, who was very frequently afflicted by dilettant tormentors of every kind, indicated his consent half ill-naturedly by a slight nod of the head. Schulhoff seated himself at the piano, while Chopin, with his back turned to him, leaned upon it. But even during the short prelude he turned his head attentively toward Schulhoff, who was now playing a recently-composed *Allegro brilliant en forme de sonate* (afterward dedicated to Chopin as op. 1).† Drawing, with increasing interest, ever nearer to the keys of the piano, he listened to the exquisite, poetical playing of the young Bohemian. His pale features became animated, and in his countenance and by his gestures, he revealed his earnest approval to those present. When Schulhoff had concluded his piece, Chopin reached his hand to him with the words, "You are a true artist—a colleague!"

When Schulhoff, at his visit a few days after, asked the honored artist to accept the dedication of the composition which he had played, the latter thanked him in the most hearty manner, saying in the presence of some ladies: "I am greatly flattered by the honor which you do me."

*This piano manufactory is no longer in existence.

†Published by S. Richault, Paris, and by Stern & Co., Berlin.

CHAPTER VI.

DOMESTIC SORROWS—TWO LETTERS FROM GEORGES SAND—
DISAGREEMENT WITH HER—JOURNEY TO ENGLAND—RETURN
TO PARIS—CHOPIN'S ILLNESS AND DEATH.

THE apprehensions of the physicians began to be realized. The manner of life which Chopin led in Paris was wholly contrary to their direction, and the saddest consequences could not be averted, the symptoms of consumption now (1840) really appeared. The sufferer was much tortured by sleeplessness, and in such nights his active, ever-changing, mostly sad fancies, held sway over him. One could no longer be deceived concerning the seriousness of his condition. The annual summer sojourn at Nohant had always brought some relief to Chopin. He could live there, free and after his own pleasure, and according as his humor was, rest or busy himself with composing. The winter, alas, always aggravated anew the suffering of the artist.

The benefit which the mild, pure air of Nohant had brought him, was destroyed by the rough winds which come in the train of autumn and winter.

On the third of May, 1844, Frederic received the startling news that the father, whom he most tenderly loved, was dead. The invalid was bowed to the earth by these mournful tidings. The thought that it had not been granted to him to sweeten the last moments of the dear one, to receive his blessing, and farewell, was a bitter pain to him, and filled his whole soul. Frederic felt that he owed it to his mother and sister to write to them, and to seek to console them at least with a few words, to mingle his tears with theirs, if only by letter; but as often as he made the resolution, he lacked the strength to execute it.

Georges Sand, who was at that time still loyal to Chopin, finally

undertook this sad duty, and in a letter to the mother of the man whom she had once passionately loved, and for whom she still cherished friendship and respect, expressed her sympathy for the heavy bereavement which she had suffered.

I give here, an exact copy of this letter of Georges Sand to Madame Chopin.

PARIS, *May* 29, 1844.

Madame:—I do not think that I can offer other consolation to the excellent mother of my dear Frederic, than the assurance of the courage and resignation of that admirable child. You know his sorrow is deep and his heart is bowed down, but through the mercy of God, he is not ill, and we may set out at any time for the country, where he will at last rest after so terrible a trial. His only thought is of you, of his sisters, of all his relatives, whom he so fondly cherishes, and whose affliction distresses and preoccupies him as much as his own. At least, do not on your part, be distressed about his external condition. I am not able to take away from him this sorrow, so deep, so legitimate, so lasting; but I can at least watch over his health, and surround him by as much affection and care as you yourself would. This is a very delightful duty which I have, with happiness, imposed upon myself, and which I shall never neglect. I promise you this, *Madame*, and I hope that you have faith in my devotion to him. I do not say to you that your grief has effected me as much as if I had known the admirable man whom you mourn. My sympathy, however sincere it may be, can not lighten this terrible stroke, but in telling you that I will consecrate my days to his son, and that I regard him as my own, I know that I am able to give you some tranquility of mind. Therefore I have taken the liberty to write to you to tell you that I am deeply devoted to you as to the adored mother of my dear friend.

GEORGES SANDS.

Alexander Thies* was also among the admirers and friends of

*Alex. Thies, born in Warsaw, 1804, died in Paris, 1846, a Polish jurist and high official. Besides many scientific treatises, which appeared in home and foreign

Chopin. He had often seen Frederic in Paris, and through him had become more intimately acquainted with Madame Sand, whom he admired as an authoress. He made inquiries, full of interest, about Chopin and Mickiewicz, and at the close of the letter wished for Madame Sand herself, good health, prosperity and fame. I purposely quote the three words, that the meaning of the following letter to Alexander Thies may be intelligible to the reader:

PARIS, *March 25, 1845.*

Monsieur :—We are very guilty toward you, myself especially; because he (Chopin) writes so little and he has so many excuses in his constant state of weariness and suffering, that you ought to pardon him. I have always hoped to induce him to write to you, but I have had nothing but resolutions and promises, and I resolve to begin, sure of not obtaining, between his cough and his lessons, an instant of repose and quiet. This is to say that his health is always thus uncertain. Since the weather has been so very cold here, he has been especially afflicted; I also am almost always sick, and to-day I am writing to you with the remains of a fever. But you? You suffer more than we, and you speak of pain. You are a stoical christian, and there is enough of the good and noble in your doctrine, I yield you, for form's sake, upon that point. You can not convert me, but what does that matter to you? You are not of those fierce catholics who condemn dissenters to everlasting punishment. Besides the orthodoxy of these principles of intolerance is very much controverted, and your great heart may take its place upon which ever side it chooses; as for me, I hope to be saved as well as another, although I have sinned more than once, as well as others. But there is more mercy up above than sin here below; otherwise this would not be divine justice, this would be human justice, the punishment of the fallible; iniquitous blasphemy, and from that I recoil with horror.

journals, he has also published: "*Dernier mot sur le pouvoir social*" (Paris 1836), "*Code civil de l'empire de Russie*" (Paris 1841), "*Précis des notions historiques sur la formation du corps des lois russes*" (Petersburg 1843).

I shall tell you nothing of Mickiewicz; he has not visited us this year and I have not seen him.* I have not even read his book. I regard him also as a noble patient; but without believing him upon the way of truth, I believe him as well as you and myself upon the road of safety. If he is convinced of his error, humble and loving God, God will not abandon him. God does not trifle, and I can not believe that such a soul does not raise some corner of the mysterious veil with which it has been enveloped during the last year.

I thank you for your kind wishes for health, prosperity and glory; all that is chimerical. We are here below to suffer and toil; health is a blessing from heaven, in so far as we render good to those who have nothing; prosperity is impossible to any one who wishes to help his brothers, for in that case the more he is able to receive the more he ought to give. Glory is a trifle to amuse children. A serious mind can see nothing else than the mournful result of the ignorance of men, their ready infatuation with trifles. Health, then, would be the only desirable good among your three wishes, but I do not have this, and I do not murmur, since you who deserve it more than I, have not recovered it. Have you now hope in that treatment which you have undertaken with so much courage?

Write me that you are better, that shall console us for not being well. Ah, when do you come to us again? We shall go into the country early, unless the spring is as disagreeable as the winter. I hope that you will return to us here, and if you stay, we wish to see you at Nohant. You ought to make amends to us for neglecting us the other time. My children thank you for your kind remembrance, and make also vows for you.

Yours heartily, always and very sincerely, as you know.

GEORGES SAND.

* From December, 1840 to March 28, 1844, Mickiewicz lectured at the *Collège de France* on Slavic literatures. His wide-spread reputation and his rare eloquence attracted large audiences; he afterward fell into a morbid mysticism. Instead of literature, he spoke of dreamy Messianism; for this reason, the authorities prohibited the further publication of his lectures. These appeared under the title: "*Les Slaves, Cours professé au Collège de France*" (5 vols, Paris 1849).

The letters of Georges Sand tell us, alas, that even at that time, Chopin's condition was regarded as hopeless. Soon after his father's death, the patient, so much in need of consolation and cheering influence, sustained another great affliction in the loss of his best friend in Paris, Johannes Matuszynski. His increased physical sufferings intensified also his despondency of mind, which since that time was often troubled by the most horrible fancies. Georges Sand speaks of this to one of her friends, who also knew Chopin well: "The Catholic doctrine presents death to us in a terrible light, because it speaks of Purgatory, instead of enthusiastic love for the pure soul of a loved one who lives now in a better world. Chopin had often frightful visions, and I was obliged to spend the nights near his sleeping-room, to frighten away the phantoms which he saw, both during his moments of wakefulness and in his dreams. The Polish folk-legends, with their ghosts and superstitions, engross much of his thoughts. Apparitions harass and entangle him in their enchanted circle, and instead of beholding his father and his friend smile in the resplendent heaven—as the Lutheran faith represents—he imagined that their death-heads were lying beside his couch, or that he was tearing himself from their cold embraces."

With each month the disease made greater progress, and his strength was visibly failing. The cough became more stubborn, and many a day the patient was so feeble and suffered to such a degree from want of breath that, if he wished to visit his friends, he had to be carried up the steps. The compositions of the period from 1843—1847, are: *Polonaise*, op. 53; *Berceuse*, op. 57; *Sonata in B-minor*, op. 58; *Mazourkas*, op. 59 and 63; *Barcarole*, op. 60; *Polonaise — Fantasia*, op. 61, and *Sonata in G-minor for piano and violoncello*, op. 65.

These are thoroughly beautiful, poetical productions; but the sadness and peculiar excitement of feeling which resound from the two last mentioned, prove already the diseased mental condition of the musician. The musical ideas have no longer the delicious purity of his earlier works, and touch not infrequently upon the eccentric.

But what manner of grief and bitter pain had not in these years agitated the delicately-strung soul of the artist, inclined naturally to melancholy?

Chopin, who, in spite of his self-preoccupation, still noticed everything which went on around him, as in him inborn sensitiveness supplied the place of the gift of observation, could no longer conceal from himself that the woman who, through the passionateness of her love, whom he himself had loved with all the resignation and deep poetical fervor of an artist, that she, upon whose constancy he could have built as upon a rock, was growing colder toward him day by day. His noble pride said to him: "You must leave her, for she regards you as a burden;" but his moral sense, founded upon his education, upon the beautiful example of conjugal fidelity and love which his parents had given, admonished him again: "You must remain." There were moments for Chopin, in his younger years, when he scrupled somewhat at his illicit relation to Aurora Dudevant Sand, when he earnestly wished to be able to lead the beloved woman to the altar, and cursed the circumstances which prevented him from doing this. Later he consoled himself with the conviction that the faithfulness of each to the other hallowed the alliance between them, and it is unquestionable that nothing on earth could have induced him to separate from her.

Madame Georges Sand thought otherwise. The imaginative woman, susceptible of beauty, had loved the interesting and celebrated musician, who was some years younger than herself, but the sick, depressed man became now a burden to her. At first, her occasional frowns, the shorter visits to the sick-room, showed that her sympathy for him was on the wane; Chopin was very painfully disturbed by this, but he was silent, for, according to his idea, he would have esteemed it ungallant to bring about a rupture. No longer strong of will, as a man in good health, he accepted patiently the innumerable little mortifications which deeply wounded him; he wished — so his moral feeling bade him — to expiate the wrong which he had committed, when he had given himself up to a woman, and regarded

her as his own, while she could not lawfully belong to him. The complaints which Madame Sand uttered in his presence, that the nursing of the invalid exhausted her strength, grieved him; he begged her to leave him alone, to go out into the fresh air; he conjured her not to renounce her pleasures for his sake, to visit the theater, to give companies, etc.; he would be happy, silent and alone, if he only knew that she was happy.

Finally, while the sick artist was still not thinking of a separation from her, an heroic means, as Count Stanislaus Tarnowski relates, was decided upon. Georges Sand wrote a novel, entitled: "*Lucrezia Floriana*," the plot of which is briefly as follows: "Prince Carl, a man of noble and sympathetic character, but sickly, nervous, jealous, proud, full of aristocratic tendencies and views, has fallen passionately in love with Lucrezia, a woman no longer young, who had renounced the world and love, and lived only for her children and good works. She is a celebrated artiste, who does not assume to be better than she is, but yet is better than her reputation. The passionate love of Prince Carl proved to be a dangerous malady, which threatened his life. Lucrezia saved him, loved him, but foresaw that this love must be to her only torture, and concealed it; but as Carl became more and more passionate in his feeling for her, and his life was again endangered, this adored being whom he had chosen, sacrificed and consecrated herself to her lover." It is singular that women of a certain age, like to conceal their emotions under the pretext of sacrifice and motherly care. They do not love; but the weak, sick, nervous being needs nursing, assistance and tenderness. Thence originates an unpleasant, painful mingling of a counterfeited motherly affection, which in truth, is not motherly, but which we often find as in *Lucrezia Floriana*. "Whence comes this unnatural, specious feeling?" asks the authoress of this romance; "perhaps, when such a heroine loves at the age in which, as Hamlet says, 'the heart and soul no longer feel;' she sinks low in the eyes of humanity and in her own; and in order to raise herself, and to palliate her feelings and course

of conduct, she assumes the pretext of sacrifice and tender care." In the same way, had the well-known Madame de Warrens, of whom J. J. Rousseau speaks so much in his "Confessions;" so did Lucrezia Floriani explained her love for Carl. For two months, she lives unspeakably happy through the power of this love; at the expiration of that time, everything changes, Carl is jealous, unjust and capricious; he cannot tolerate those who formerly appeared in Lucrezia's house as friends of the celebrated woman. Every moment come outbursts of anger, nervous excitement, or paroxysms of insanity and despair. Lucrezia, tortured by it, finally grows weary of these ever-recurring scenes, her strength fails, her heart suffers, but she conceals everything; she does not complain, because she has vowed to make every sacrifice for Carl's happiness. She knows that she will die and her children become orphans, for Carl will torture her until, at last, she dies; but nevertheless she endures silently—she has sworn to be true to him — everything which he inflicts upon her. After a few years of such a life, continually tortured and estranged, through Carl's jealousy, from her friends, she has already ceased long ago to love him, but endures him like a martyr. Through constant sacrifice, Lucrezia has finally exhausted her strength and dies.

According to the opinion universally prevailing at that time, Carl was the faithful portraiture of Chopin, although on account of the exaggeration with which his character is delineated, he is caricatured. The love-story of the novel, strikingly resembles that which he experienced in his relation to Georges Sand. It contained much happiness, but also much bitterness, and no one felt this more than Chopin himself. But the invalid, as well as all the world, knew that the actual Lucrezia had not died from sacrifice, and that the Carl of the novel was intended to be no other than himself. It is said that, with a refined cruelty, the proof-sheets were delivered to him with the request that he should correct the typographical errors; it is, however, a fact, that the children of Madame Sand, pointing to the novel, said to Chopin: "Do you know, Mr. Chopin, that you are meant by Prince Carl?" Every one who knew

the motive of this work, has condemned the author for it. She excused herself, declaring that she had been misunderstood, that motives had been attributed to her which she had not at all had.* "Prince Carl is no artist," she said extenuatingly; "he is dreamy, but nothing more; he is no genius, and has no claims to be such. His personality is scarcely raised above the commonplace; he is never amiable, and is so little the picture of the great artist, that Chopin, who daily read the manuscript, which lay upon my writing-table, never thought that it was designedly to deceive him—him who was otherwise so suspicious. But afterward, through the gossip of evil tongues, he actually imagined that in Prince Carl I had meant to portray him, and in Lucrezia, the martyr, to portray myself. My enemies, who were among his friends, persuaded him that my novel intended to represent my relation to him. His memory was at that time somewhat feeble, and when the substance of this book was related to him in a distorted manner, he had already forgotten the true delineation of the position and peculiarities of Prince Carl. Why did Chopin not read my novel a second time?" Madame Sand deeply regretted that at the moment, when the rupture between her and the great artist was inevitable, Matuszynski was no longer alive, his friendship for Chopin, and the influence which he had upon him, "would have been a sure means," as Georges Sand says, "to render the whisperings of intrigantes harmless." Even if it had come to a separation, it would have been less painful and violent through Matuszynski's mediation. In spite of all this, the sick, and for this reason, less passionate man, endured with the most painful emotions, the mortification which the novel inflicted upon him. "If I leave her now—the woman whom I honored and loved," he said to himself, "I make the romance a true story, and expose her to the blame; yea, contempt of the better class of people." He continued nobly to endure it, withdrawing ever more within himself, until at last he could endure it no longer. In the beginning of the year

* "*Historie de ma vie*," Vol. 13.

1847, Madame Sand brought about the complete rupture by a violent scene of which her daughter was the innocent occasion. To the unjust reproaches which she raised again, he only replied: "I will at once leave your house, and desire, that for you I may henceforth no longer exist." She had earnestly wished for these words; she opposed no objection, and the same day, the artist left the house of Georges Sand forever. This excitement, and the grief arising out of it, threw him again upon the sick-bed, and for a long time it was seriously feared that he would soon exchange it for the coffin.

One of his best friends, and at the same time his favorite pupil, Gutmann, nursed him with the greatest and most sacrificing care. How deeply grateful the sufferer was for this faithfulness, is proved by continuous questions which he directed to the friends and acquaintances who visited him. "How is Gutmann? Is he not very tired? Will it not fatigue him too much, if he continue to watch by me? Ah, I do not like to trouble him so, and yet I do not like to have any other about me so much as him." These were almost the only words which he spoke, for his visitors would not allow him to talk and strove to entertain and draw him away from his own gloomy thoughts. The efforts of his physician, and Gutmann's unwearied nursing, succeeded at last, in partially restoring Chopin. When he again appeared for the first time among his friends, they found him changed beyond description. In the following summer he was apparently much better, so that he was able again to employ himself with composing. He did not wish to leave Paris, as he was formerly accustomed to do at this time of the year. Thus he lost the beneficial influence which the fresh country air had always exerted upon his health. In the winter of 1847-1848, the condition of Chopin's health was much more precarious. His residence in Paris became gradually unpleasant for him, because of political disturbances and other causes. He decided to go for awhile to England, where among his acquaintances and friends, he numbered various kind, well-wishing persons who had often invited him in the most cordial way to come to England as soon as he had leisure. But before he left

Paris, he wished to take leave of the public of the continental capital in a concert.*

This took place on the 16th of February, 1848, in Pleyel-Hall, and Chopin could not have wished a more select, brilliant circle of listeners than he had on this day. † He was received with enthusiasm by the assembly, among whom were personages of the highest rank, and many of the first art-celebrities of Paris, and to the close of the concert, every one exerted himself to give to the gifted musician, the rare virtuoso, the amiable man, proofs of the highest respect and admiration which his talent deserved. Frederic, himself was deeply touched; this triumph, the last which he experienced in Paris, was for him a balsam for so many of the wounds which destiny had thrust upon him, and which even though they had begun gradually to heal, yet still at times sorely pained. The political events, which on the twenty-third of February, destroyed a dynasty and drove a King with his family from the country, effected Chopin deeply. He had never experienced anything from Louis Phillippe but kindness and sympathy, and lamented the fate of the house of Orleans. But at the same time he drew from this revolution new hopes for his unhappy fatherland, which he still loved as passionately and as faithfully, as in the time when he, as a youth in Warsaw, set to music patriotic songs, which were never allowed to be brought before the

* It cannot be said that Chopin forced himself upon the public with his concerts. Within the years 1834-1848, he had given in Paris only one public concert with the co-operation of Viardot, Garcia and Franchomme, (February 21, 1842), in which he played the following compositions: *Ballade*, (A-flat major); three *Mazourkas*, (a-flat major, B-major, A-minor); three *etudes*, (A-flat major, F-minor, C-minor); *Preludes*, (D-flat major); *Impromptu*, (G-flat major); *Nocturne*, (D-flat major). This concert, as could not possibly be otherwise with Chopin's poetical, deep-felt playing, left a greater and more delightful impression upon the public, than the first in the "Italians." Chopin gave almost every year in Pleyel-Hall, musical seances, in which he always played alone, and for tickets to which, his admirers and friends paid twenty-frances.

† Chopin's last concert began with a trio by Mozart; he was assisted by Alard and Franchomme. Chopin then played his new cello-sonata, in G-minor (op. 65), and some smaller pieces, as *etudes*, *preludes*, *mazourkas* and *waltzes*.

public. But when he saw that the excitement in the people's minds, which took its course like a hurricane through almost the whole of Europe, brought neither more liberty nor more independence to Poland, he more rarely opened his heart, incensed at the course of events, when he spoke of politics.

There was now no longer any obstacle in the way to his decision to travel from France to England; his friends, although they were attached to him, did not, dissuade him from this intention, but hoped that he would soon feel at home in London. A month before his departure, in the latter part of March, he was invited to a soiree, by a lady whose hospitable house he had often and gladly visited in former times. For a few moments he hesitated whether he should accept this invitation, for within the last four years he had visited the Parisian drawing-rooms less frequently; finally, as if impelled by an inward voice he promised to go.

An hour before Chopin entered the house of Madame H——, he was the subject of lively conversation. A musical connoisseur was giving an account of his meeting with the celebrated artist at Nohant, of his wonderful playing in the beautiful moonlight summer-nights. A lady remarked: "Chopin's spirit breathes from the best of Madame Sand's novels. Like all authors of lively imaginations, she often lost patience in her work, because, before she had yet quite finished a plan, she was already busied with a new one. In order to keep herself to the writing-table, and to be able to work with more care, she begged her beloved, to improvise upon the piano while she wrote, and inspired by his playing, she wrote thus her best novels."

After these words, a deep, half-audible sigh escaped the lips of a lady, who softly entered the salon from the adjoining room, and by whom the speaker had not been seen. Her pale face was flushed, tears were standing in her deep, wonderful eyes; what could have moved her soul so powerfully?

Several gentlemen now entered the drawing-room, the lady drew back and seated herself behind an ivy-screen, which formed a con-

venient hiding-place. Perhaps an hour she sat thus, unnoticed by the guests, observed only by the hostess, who understood her conduct. When the company became more numerous, the lady arose and with her peculiar, fluctuating step, she went up to Chopin, extending her right hand as in greeting. "Frederic!" glided over her lips, audible only to him—he beheld for the first time, after a long, bitter separation, Georges Sand standing close before him, penitent, apparently anxious to conciliate him. A deathly paleness overspread his delicate, emaciated, but still attractive features; a moment his soft eyes met hers, which were fastened searchingly upon his face; then he turned and left the room.

Toward the end of April, he said farewell to his Parisian friends, and those of his countrymen who were residing in the capital, and set out upon his journey to London. Chopin's compositions had already long ago attained deserved popularity in England; they were always gladly heard and extolled; consequently he was received wherever he appeared, with extraordinary respect and that cordial sympathy which is the highest reward for the poet and artist. The hospitality and high respect with which his old acquaintances greeted him, the complimentary manner with which his new ones received him, delighted Frederic's heart, sensitive to friendship and affection. He lived again in society, and hoped, amid totally different surroundings, giving himself only to his beloved art, to forget the woman, for whom, despite all the harm which she had wrought him, he earnestly longed at times. Her dazzling intellect, her inexhaustible fancy, her passionate love of earlier days had once made for him a time of fairy-like happiness, which he could never, never forget, but however deeply it pained him to do it, his judgment said to him that that woman is not worthy a sigh.

After Chopin had been presented at the Duchess of Switzerland's to Queen Victoria, and had played at Court, he received invitations daily to the best houses of England, and was everywhere received with marks of honor and finally as a declared favorite. The late companies, the need of sleep, the discomforts in general of drawing-

room life, were of no advantage to the impaired health of the celebrated man, and were wholly disapproved by his physicians. In order to live more quietly, he accepted an invitation to Scotland, whose rough climate, as was foreseen, had an unfavorable effect upon his health. The mists which prevail there, extremely injurious to nervous men, affected his mental condition, and generated within him those melancholy thoughts which had already often tortured him in earlier years, and helped to color his most intense and wildly romantic compositions. From Scotland he wrote, among other things, to his friend Gryzmala:

"I have played in Glasgow at a concert at which the entire elite was assembled. To-day I am much depressed; O, this fog! Although from the window at which I am writing I have the most beautiful view of Stirling Castle—this is the same in which, as you will remember, Robert Bruce took delight—and hills, lakes, a charming park—in a word, I have before me a view most celebrated for its beauty of any in Scotland, yet I can see anything only when the mist is forced to yield for a short time to the sun. Would that this might happen oftener! I shall soon forget Polish, speak French like an Englishman and English like a Scotchman. If I write you no jeremiad, it is not because you cannot console me, but because you are the only one who knows everything; and if I once begin to complain it is without end, and always in the same tone. It is not true, however, when I say always in the same tone, for it grows worse with me every day. I am weaker, I cannot compose, not from want of desire, but from physical causes, and because I am every week in a different place. But what am I to do? At least I am reserving something for the winter."

Notwithstanding the marks of friendship of two Scottish sisters, one of whom, his pupil, Miss J. W. Stirling, had received her master with the greatest hospitality, and had persuaded him in the most cordial manner to undertake the journey, the stay there was still not pleasant for him; he even wished sometimes for wings, that he might make his way again to France. I quote further from his letter to Gryzmala:

"I am unable to do anything the whole morning, and when I am dressed I am already so exhausted that I am obliged to rest. After dinner I must sit two hours with the gentlemen, hear what they say, and see what they drink. I am wearied to death by this ; I think of something altogether different, and then go into the parlor, where I exert all my strength to be animated, for all are very desirous to hear me. Afterward my good Daniel carries me up the steps to my sleeping-room, undresses me, puts me to bed, leaves the light burning, and then I am allowed to sigh and dream, only to spend the next day just as the preceding one. If I have settled down to anything, I am obliged to tear myself away, for my Scottish ladies allow me—of course with the best intentions in the world—no rest. They fetch me away to present me to all their relations ; they will kill me yet by their kindness, and I must gratify them out of sheer amiability."

Intellectual men never quite lose their humor ; and thus also in Chopin, a little gleam of merriment, a spark of the wit with which he shone in earlier days, broke forth from his sorrowful mind. Once he related that he was at the opera in London, when Jenny Lind made a first appearance, and the Queen appeared again, for the first time, after a long retirement. Chopin says : " Both produced great effect, but upon me especially old Wellington, who, like a stern monarchically-inclined guard sat before his king, like a faithful old dog in his kennel, before the castle of his master. I have become acquainted with Jenny Lind ; she is a very original Swede."

Nevertheless his weariness of life increased, and he wrote to Gryzmala : " I am about to start to Manchester, where a large concert is to take place ; I shall play twice without orchestral accompaniment. Albani is to come, also, but all this does not interest me ; I shall sit down and play. What I shall do after that, I do not know. If I only knew surely that I shall not be sick here during the winter." In another letter to the same person he complains that he is sick, that he is obliged to play in a concert, and commissions his friend in Paris to look for suitable apartments for him there. He

adds: "I do not know myself why I trouble you with all this, for I really have no desire for anything, but yet I must take care of myself, and therefore beg that you will assist me in this." Then come recollections of the unhappy love which he cannot forget: "I have never cursed anyone, but now I am so tired of life that I am on the point of cursing Lucretia; but one suffers even then, and suffers the more for the reason that he daily grows older in malignity." Finally he says: "At home they are foolishly anxious about me; I cannot indeed be sadder than I am, but neither can I be glad. In general, I no longer feel, I only vegetate, and am waiting patiently for the end." And in truth, the end was soon to come. In his last letter from England he writes: "Thursday I shall leave horrible London! In addition to everything else, I have neuralgia. Tell Pleyel to send a grand piano to me Thursday evening; have it covered and buy a bouquet of violets,* that there may be a fragrant odor in the drawing-room. I would like," he continues, "to find, upon my return, some poetry in my rooms, and in my bed-room where I shall probably soon lie down for a long time. I hope to be in Paris Friday evening; a day longer here, and I shall become insane or die. My Scottish ladies are good, but so tiresome, God help me! They have concerned themselves so much about me, that I cannot easily get away from them. Order all the rooms to be thoroughly heated and dusted, perhaps I may still recover." This hope of Chopin was based, alas, upon a delusive fancy. In the beginning of the year 1849, he left London, having played for the last time at a concert, largely attended, which he gave for the benefit of Polish emigrants. Soon after his arrival in Paris, the suffering artist sustained a severe loss. Dr. Molin, a celebrated physician, to whose skill and care Chopin owed the prolongation of his life, suddenly died. From this time complete despair seized the deeply afflicted patient. The loss of the beloved, revered physician, the sight of whom consoled and calmed him, was for him irreparable.

*) Chopin always had to have flowers, probably violets, about him.

When Chopin learned that his beloved friend, Titus Woyciechowski, intended to go to Ostende for the sake of the sea-baths, he felt a great desire to join him there. Two letters concerning this, still remain, the last perhaps which were written entirely by himself. I reproduce them literally a little further on. At that time, it was not easy for Woyciechowski, a Russian subject, to come to Paris. For that, the especial permission of the Warsaw authorities, or at least, a letter of authority from the Russian Imperial Embassy, was necessary.

Last letters of Chopin to Titus Woyciechowski:

PARIS, August 20, 1849.

Square d'Orleans, Rue St. Lazare No. 9.

MY DEAREST:

I must indeed be as ill, as I really am, that I do not leave Paris and hasten to Ostende to you; but I hope that the dear God will let you come to me. The physicians will not allow me to travel; I drink the Pyrenean waters in my own room. But your presence would do me more good than any medicine.

Yours till death, FREDERIC.

PARIS, September 12, 1849.

MY DEAR TITUS:

I had too little time to attend to the permission for your coming hither. I cannot see to it personally, I lie half the time upon the bed, but I have requested one of my friends, who has great influence, to undertake this for me; I shall hear something definite Saturday. I wished to go by rail to the boundary beyond Valenciennes, in order to meet you; but the physicians will not allow me to leave Paris, because a few days ago I was not able to get as far as the *Ville d'Avraye*, near Versailles, where I have a god-son. For this reason also, they do not send me this winter to a warmer climate. If I had been only passably well, I should surely have visited you in Belgium. Perhaps it is possible for you to come here. I am not egotistic enough to wish that you should come only on my account, for, sick as I am, you might have tedious hours with me and disenchantment, but perhaps

hours also of consolation and delightful reminiscences of our youth, and I wish that the time of our being together may be only a time of happiness.

Forever Yours,

FREDERIC.

From this day the disease made rapid progress. Chopin did not fear death, but appeared rather to await it with a kind of longing; there was no pain in the thought of giving up a life full of mournful recollections. The moments in which he had some relief, and was freer from pain, became constantly more rare. He spoke of his death, and of what should be done subsequently with his body, with perfect consciousness and great calmness. He expressed the wish to be buried in the cemetery Père LaChaise, beside Bellini, with whom he had been intimately associated in the period between 1833 and 1835. During the first days of October his disease increased so much that he was no longer able to sit up. His relatives were informed of his condition, and Chopin's eldest sister, Madame Louise Jederzejewicz, accompanied by her husband, and daughter, hastened at once to the beloved brother. The meeting between the brother and sister cannot be described; one must be able himself to feel for the two. Louise had likewise nursed the beloved brother during a severe illness in 1844, and spent some weeks with him then at No-hant; she knew now as soon as she saw him that for a short time only would he need her loving care. At intervals when he was free from pain, he could still be cheerful and hopeful. He even ordered new apartments, Place Vendome No. 12, to be rented, and minutely described how he wished to have them furnished.

The last moment finally approached. His sister and his faithful pupil, Gutmann, never left him for a moment. The Countess, Delphine Potocka, who was then at a distance from Paris, no sooner heard of the helpless condition of her revered master, than she set out upon her journey to take leave of him, who was about to be separated from them forever. In the room adjoining Chopin's bedroom

* Chopin was buried near Bellini and Cherubini, both of whom he honored.

were a few of his friends, whom the dying man, whose voice could no longer be heard, wished to see once more before he closed his eyes forever. On the fifteenth of October—it was the Sabbath, and quieter on the streets than usual—he was racked by the most violent pains; but yet he sought to smile on those who surrounded his couch. When he observed, beside his sister, the Countess Potocka, whose tears incessantly flowed, he asked her softly to sing something. With great self-control she suppressed her tears and with clear, vibrating voice, sang the Cantic to the Virgin, by Stradella, so beautifully and with such consecration, that the dying man—artist and worshipper of the beautiful to his last breath—whispered rapturously, “O, how beautiful it is! O, how beautiful! Once more, once more!” The Countess, as if strengthened from above, took her seat at the piano, and sang a Psalm by Marcello. Those who were standing beside Frederic’s couch saw that he was growing weaker every second, and sank noiselessly upon their knees. A solemn stillness reigned in the room, only the wonderful voice of Delphine Potocka was heard, like the singing of an angel, who seemed to have come to bear the soul of the noble master to the Fields of the Blessed. All present suppressed their sobs, lest the joy of the dying man, joy in the beautiful singing, should be disturbed. It was near the evening-time; the sister, kneeling beside the couch of her brother, prayed and wept.

The next morning Chopin apparently felt somewhat better. He expressed his wish for extreme unction. Alexander Jexowicki, a devout and learned priest, who was highly respected among his countrymen, appeared. The dying man twice confessed to him, receiving afterward the holy sacrament, in presence of his friends. When this solemn ceremony was over, he beckoned each one to his bed, blessed him and commended him to God. From this time he became speechless, and appeared to be no longer conscious of his surroundings. But a few hours later the spirit of the dying musician, once so brilliant and poetic, flashed up once more. His speech was restored; he turned to the priest, Jexowicki, and desired him to

pray with him. When the priest, as the Church prescribes, recited the Litany, the dying man repeated each word in a clear voice, his head resting upon Gutmann's shoulder. When his limbs were already touched by the coldness of death, he asked, "Who is with me?" He asked then for water, and when he had moistened his lips with it he bent his head and kissed the hand of his friend Gutmann, who was supporting him. When he had given expression to his grateful and friendly feeling in this kiss, he sighed once, as if freed from a burden, and closed his eyes forever. At this moment the bells of the great city announced the third hour of the morning of October 17, 1849. A few minutes afterward, when the doors of the sleeping-room were thrown open, the friends and acquaintances who were assembled in the adjoining room entered, that they might look once more upon the beloved face of the dead. It was well known in musical circles that Chopin had been very fond of flowers. On the same evening, therefore, flowers were sent in such profusion to the dead, but immortal master, that his body, lying upon the bed of state, was literally completely hidden in them. His face, which had been somewhat distorted by his long sufferings, had now, when the lifeless body no longer felt pain, an indescribable expression of blissful peace and the charm of youth. Clesinger took a cast of the face of the dead, from which he afterward made the marble bust that adorns Chopin's grave. The reverence which the Polish composer had always felt for the great musician, Mozart, had also prompted him in his last days to utter the wish that no other music should be given at his funeral-mass than Mozart's sublime Requiem. Until 1849 women had not been allowed to take part in the musical exercises in the Madelaine church; for this the especial permission of the church authorities was necessary. Chopin's friends begged for this permission, and the authorities granted it; for this reason the funeral services in memory of the master could not take place until the thirtieth of October. The most distinguished artists of Paris took part in the ceremonies. The Funeral March from the B-minor Sonata, by the deceased, which had been arranged for in-

struments by Reber for this purpose, was chosen at the Entroit. For the Offertory Léfébure-Wély played Chopin's Preludes in B-minor and E-minor.*

The solos of Mozart's Requiem were sung by Pauline Viardot-Garcia, Madame Castellan and the celebrated basso, Lablache who sang the *Tuba mirum* with magnificent effect.† Meyerbeer conducted the entire funeral service; the pall-bearers were Prince Alexander Czartoryski, Delacroix, and Gutmann. As the remains were lowered into the grave, Polish earth was scattered upon his coffin. This was the same earth which Chopin had taken with him nineteen years before, from the village Wola, as a remembrance of his beloved fatherland. He had always preserved it with devout care, and requested a short time before his death, that — if he were not to rest in Polish ground—his coffin might at least be covered with this earth.

The heart of Chopin, which always glowed with holy love for his native country, and had suffered so much longing for it, was, at his wish, delivered to the country over which the sun of his happy youth had beamed; it is temporarily preserved in the Church of the Holy Cross in Warsaw.

*) The publisher of this work, Franz Ries, gives a fac-simile of the original manuscript of this latter prelude, at the end of this Volume; this was done with the kind consent of Messrs. Breitkopf and Hartel, the publishers of the original.

†) Lablache also sang the *Tuba mirum* at Beethoven's funeral in 1827.

CHAPTER VII.

CHOPIN AS A MAN.

LITTLE yet remains to be added to that which I have already said concerning Chopin. He was an exemplary son, an affectionate brother, a faithful friend. There was something so harmonious and agreeable in his appearance that the glance dwelt upon him with pleasure. His dark-brown eyes* were merry rather than dreamy; his smile amiable and free from all bitterness. Very beautiful was his delicate, almost transparent complexion; his luxuriant hair was auburn, and soft as silk; his nose slightly bent, of Roman cut; his movements were elegant, and in his intercourse with others he had the manners of the noblest aristocrat. Every one who could comprehend true excellence, true genius, was forced, so soon as he saw Chopin, to say, "That is an extraordinary man." The sound of his voice was melodious and somewhat subdued. He was not above medium height; was by nature delicate, and, in general, resembled his mother.

One of his lady friends has not unjustly said: "His disposition was cheerful, but his heart was full of dreamy longing;" a proof that in society he was able to excite every one to mirthfulness by his joyous humor. Through his whole nature there ran a vein of sadness and enthusiasm, which attracted and prepossessed every one in his favor. In daily intercourse with the world, he was so affable and well-bred that his conduct was uninfluenced by the nervous irritabil-

* It is inexplicable why Liszt, in his work on Chopin, speaks several times of his "blue eyes."

ity, the physical sufferings, the violent antipathies, which were peculiar to him, as to all nervous people. He spoke rarely and with reserve of his feelings, and hesitated to show them, not wishing them to be misinterpreted. In Paris, he was a daily guest at certain houses, and his evenings he always spent with some family of his acquaintance. He visited in twenty or thirty *salons*, where homage was always paid him, for he charmed every one. To remove Frederic Chopin from this sphere, where he was caressed and idolized, to banish him, the darling of Princesses and Countesses, to a simple, commonplace circle, would have been nothing else than to draw him away from his aim in life.

Unlike most great artists, he had an aversion to playing in public. To give a concert was for him a disagreeable task, which he would only undertake with reluctance. He possessed so much pride that his bearing was always dignified. He was conscious of his artistic worth, but he did not overestimate it. Much more did he acknowledge the kindly fellowship, the artistic merit of others. Accustomed to elegance and ease, he loved to surround himself with luxuries. In his rooms he required elegant furniture, beautiful carpets, costly consoles, and *étagères*, which were richly covered with mementos. He had a passionate love for flowers; and, as has already been mentioned, he had them always about him. His clothing was always elegant and choice, his linen dazzlingly white, and from the best stores of Paris. He did not share the opinion of those who say that negligence is justifiable in an artist. It was said that when he was about to play in public he would previously order coats from various tailors, and all of these he tried on, but had some objection to each of them. At the last moment he usually put on one belonging to his pupil, Gutmann, which was much too large for him.

He assisted poor Polish emigrants, chiefly in the first year of their residence in France, when they were without means, to the best of his ability, partly with recommendations, partly with money or clothing. When the Princess Czartoryska opened a bazaar for the benefit of Polish emigrants, in the Hotel Lambert, Chopin spent more than

a thousand francs for pretty trifles, which he then gave back to be sold again. In this respect his generosity knew no limits. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that at his death he left no property.

When a boy he began his artistic career with a concert for the poor, and a concert for Polish emigrants, in London, was the last which he gave in his life. This unfailing readiness to help the needy alienated him from Carl Lipinski. The celebrated violinist came, in 1835, to Paris, and arranged to give a concert there. Chopin proposed that he should give one with him for the benefit of his countrymen, but Lipinski declined, observing that he did not wish to injure himself in St. Petersburg, where he expected to give concerts the next year. Chopin was so incensed by this reply that he broke off his friendly relations with Lipinski, and never pardoned his indifference and hard-heartedness toward his oppressed countrymen. He was always self-sacrificing, and ready to render service to his friends, but toward strangers he was cool and reserved. If he perceived that any one sought his acquaintance, or sent him invitations in order to make a display through him, he quickly ended the acquaintance. To a rich man, who had invited him to dinner in order that the other guests might be entertained by his playing, he answered, as he was pressingly urged to the piano : " Oh, sir, I ate so little ! " But he was never chary of his talent when he was convinced that his playing could give any one pleasure. The well known historian, Louis Blanc,* relates : " When the Republican, Gottfried Cavaignac (cousin of the famous General), knew that his last hour was near, he expressed a wish once more to hear music. Louis Blanc was personally acquainted with Chopin, and promised, if the physician would allow it, to go at once in quest of the artist, and bring him back with him. When Chopin heard from Louis Blanc what it was that he desired, he immediately placed himself at his disposal. He was led into a room, in which stood a passably good piano, and began to play. Suddenly a loud sobbing was heard. Gottfried, elevated and moved,

* *Histoire de la Revolution 1848*, Vol. II.

was animated with new life, and, with eyes full of tears, arose from his couch of pain. Chopin was so much affected that he was unable to continue his playing. Madame Cavaignac bent over her son, and gazed at him with anxious looks. The sick man, collecting all his strength, said in a feeble voice: "Don't worry, mother; it is nothing. O what a beautiful art music is, so felt and so played!"

In general, Chopin disliked letter-writing; he needed some special inducement thereto. He exchanged letters continuously only with his relatives and his friend, Titus Woyciechowski, although from the year 1835 the latter correspondence decreased somewhat. That his letters afterwards became less frequent to his relatives also may perhaps be explained by his relation to Georges Sand, and by his illness. He did not venture to give detailed accounts of his manner of living. Knowing the strict moral views of his parents, he preferred to be silent concerning Georges Sand, and his relation to her. A certain restraint consequently became apparent in his letters, while earlier ones were so permeated by frankness that on reading them one could believe that one saw him and heard him speak. "It was often exceedingly comical," says Liszt, "when Chopin received an invitation to dinner, which he could not or would not accept. He preferred to go a great distance to excuse himself personally before he could decide to decline the invitation in writing."

He liked to send with his letters to his sisters, nephews, and nieces, from time to time, little plays, or fashion articles. He was as delighted as a child when he could give them surprises; but he also valued the least remembrance which his family sent him from home. The day on which a letter came from Warsaw was a day of rejoicing with him. Yet he never spoke of it; but in the quiet of his home he devoted his time to the remembrance of those whom he loved. He carefully preserved every gift which he received from his parental home, for everything which came from his family was of the highest value to him. He never gave such gifts away, nor would he allow them to be touched nor looked at a long time by another.

Imbued from childhood with the doctrines of the Catholic Church, he disliked to discuss or even speak of religious questions. He kept his faith locked up in his own breast. He seldom took an active part in conversations upon politics and literature, although he liked to listen to them. He never obtruded his own views upon any one, but if his beloved art were mentioned slightly, or, perhaps, attacked, he was always ready for open combat. A romanticist from genuine conviction, he entered the lists for the defense of these. During the first years of his residence in Paris, especially, he gave many proofs that he was devoted with his whole soul to the romantic movement. At that time Liszt and Berlioz were the most important representatives of the modern musical tendency, and were withal the ablest, the boldest, and most persevering of all the young men engaged in the contest with the classicists. Soon after, in 1832, Chopin, who was in his own country during this conflict, adopted the views of Berlioz and Liszt, and was one of those who openly renounced the old style and pointed out its charlatanism. Chopin's views remained unchanged during the whole period of this struggle for Romanticism, in which compositions were produced which may justly be called masterpieces. He did not make the least concessions to those who were more anxious to employ art as a means of gain, reputation, and distinction, than to serve it for its own sake, and promote its advancement. He even gave up, without hesitation, the association which he so highly valued with his fellow-artists, when he was convinced that they went too far in their dislike for any innovation, and endeavored to exert an influence upon his artistic activity. His art was sacred to him, and he never praised a musical composition, nor the interpretation of one, unless he esteemed it worthy of approbation. He never employed artistic means to attain extraordinary triumphs, or secure more rapid popularity for his works. He would occasionally say to his intimate friends: "I believe that the intrinsic worth of my works will commend them; whether they are recognized to-day or to-morrow is, in the end, wholly a matter of indifference."

The thorough study of his youth, his habitual reflection, and his

great reverence for classic beauty, always prevented him from groping about in the dark. The remarkable care and conscientiousness with which Chopin finished his works was a shield for him against all superficial or unfriendly critics, who sought eagerly for little faults that they might find occasion for blame. Early accustomed to exercise the severest self-criticism, he threw many compositions into his waste-basket which another perhaps would have published with pride. He never attempted compositions which were foreign to his talent, nor did he ever begin anything unless he knew certainly that he could bring it to a successful end. Educated in the German sense and fashioned after German masters, Chopin also valued German music most. To him, Hændel, Gluck, Bach, Haydn, and Mozart were ideal perfections. Although he bowed beneath the might of Beethoven's genius, the gigantic conceptions of this master were less sympathetic to him than the creations of Mozart, with the charm and sweetness of their melodies. He thought that delicate finish was lacking here and there, in the works of Beethoven; their plan appeared to him too colossal, their outbursts of passion too violent and grasping. In 1830, Schubert's compositions, particularly some of his songs, began to find their way into Paris. Chopin, like all impartial musicians, was thoroughly delighted by the richness of their melody, but regretted that the composer often allowed himself to be beguiled by his luxurious, welling fancy to overstep the formal boundaries in his larger works, and thus to weaken their charm.

Droll things concerning Chopin's descent were related during the first period of his residence in Paris, when the attention of the musical world was beginning to be directed to the great artist. Some considered him a German; others, because of his French name, thought him a Frenchman. At every opportunity Chopin protested energetically against these assumptions, and with the pride of a good patriot declared everywhere that he was a Pole. His nationality, like his patriotism, expressed itself in word and deed. The latter was shown, not only in his liberality, not only in this that he voluntarily shared the exile of his unfortunate countrymen, but also in the choice of his

friends, and his preference for his Polish pupils. Nevertheless he thoroughly disliked to boast of this love for his native country. Of French descent, on his father's side, and perfectly familiar with the French language, he was yet unable to conceal entirely, in his pronunciation, the nationality of his mother. As he drew his inspiration from Polish folk-songs, so also he loved to imitate the linguistic usages current in the provinces, and—when he was in a particularly good humor—was very happy in reproducing some features of its uncouth simplicity. If, for instance, Chopin had saddened an intimate circle of listeners by his playing, he knew how to enliven them at once by his admirable imitation of the peasant dialects, especially that of the provinces Masury and Cracow. When Frédéric conversed with friends upon the excellences of the modern languages, and made a comparison of their merits, he always extolled his mother-tongue to the skies, and could not sufficiently praise its melodiousness, its richness, its significant expressions, its delicacy and masculine vigor.

Imaginative natures are seldom wholly free from superstition. Chopin possessed it in the highest degree, and his superstition was stronger or weaker in proportion as he was physically well or ill. As he sauntered along the boulevards one evening, coming from a *soirée* with some friends, among them was A. Szmitkowski, to whom he dedicated his splendid mazourka, Op. 50, he jestingly spoke of the inconveniences which were here and there imposed upon him by his financial conditions. "I wish," he said, laughing, "that some good spirit would put into my trunk, by magic, about twenty thousand francs. This would be just about enough to so set me up once for all, that I could have the comfort which I love so much." During the night he dreamed that his wish had been fulfilled. A few days afterward he opened a secret compartment of his trunk, in which he was accustomed to keep his money and a few mementos which he especially valued, and here, indeed, he found the mentioned sum. His pupil and enthusiastic friend, Miss Stirling, had—of course without his knowledge—ordered it to be placed there by Szmitkowski, when he had told her of Chopin's wish and singular dream. He disliked

the numbers seven and thirteen. He never undertook anything of importance on Mondays and Fridays, because he was convinced—and almost all Poles share this conviction—that these are unlucky days, on which nothing succeeds. Devoted from childhood to music, he lived constantly in the realm of sound. Even if he were not listening to it, his thought was only of music, and he dreamed of it by night. One can readily perceive how the continual occupation with this art must have irritated and excited his nerves, which were, by nature, exceedingly sensitive; how the sensibilities, the imagination, even the whole moral nature of Chopin, became gradually ethereal and delicate; how painfully every discord from contact with homely realities was felt in his inmost being. He confided his innermost thoughts then to his instrument, and these became ever sadder and more distracted, until at last his heart broke.

Liszt says of Chopin: "With the modern, simple, and less ecstatic outward features, Chopin united the reverent worship for Art which the earliest masters of the Middle Ages paid to it. Like them, he regarded the exercise of his art as a high and holy vocation. Like them, he was proud to be consecrated, by nature, as its priest, and he brought to its service that pious devotion which at once ennoble the artist and makes him happy." Even in his last hours this feeling was especially patent, and it is more intelligible to us through a knowledge of Polish customs. In our day still, although more seldom than formerly, the dying carefully select the clothing in which they wish to be buried. Many even had them furnished long before their death. Their most cherished, most earnest thoughts thereby find expression. Garments of the cloister are chosen also by people of the world, but of devout faith, especially by women, for their last attire. Men preferred to be seen for the last time, by their friends, in their official dress; they even frequently desired to have their weapons put into the grave with them.

Chopin, although not only a composer, but also one of the first pianists (according to many, the first of his time), still gave proportionately the fewest concerts. Nevertheless, he wished to be buried

in the clothing which he was accustomed to wear at his concerts. A natural, fervent feeling, springing from an inexhaustible fountain of enthusiasm for his art, doubtless inspired within him this last wish, which was gratified. Whoever beheld him thus slumbering among flowers and palm branches, in the dress so well known to the enthusiastic listeners now surrounding his coffin, was compelled to say that Frederic Chopin had remained true to himself, for his last thoughts were devoted to his art. Driven by political troubles from his home, separated from his relatives, led finally into the thorny path of an unhappy love, and enfeebled by disease, he departed too soon from this world, which he enriched by the sublime effusions of his inward being.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHOPIN AS A COMPOSER.

AS a creative artist, Chopin occupies a position which is wholly exceptional. Confining himself to the narrow limits of a single instrument, he has had, according to the decision of competent judges, not only the peculiar advantage of being a finished, scientifically-educated musician, but at the same time a true poet whose productions have excited a very wide-spread influence upon all modern composers for the piano, somewhat as Heine in the province of poetry. Both knew how to give us complete pictures of their mental moods in the smallest form—with this difference, that Heine's skepticism acted destructively upon these miniature forms, while Chopin's harmonious nature fertilized them. How thoroughly must Chopin have been penetrated by the thought that he was especially fitted and chosen for the enrichment of piano-literature, to resist the temptation to bring to his aid the apparently more grateful, at all events, the outwardly more effective orchestral apparatus, and voluntarily to confine himself to this one instrument for which he has certainly composed masterly works—works which, in their kind, will remain unattainable.

"In our day," Liszt very justly observes, "we are too much accustomed to recognize as composers of justly great reputation, only those who have left behind at least half a dozen operas, as many oratorios and a few symphonies, since it is customary to demand that all this, and possibly still more, be accomplished by a great musician. However, widely spread, this view may be, its justness is nevertheless very questionable. It is by no means my

intention to attack the reputation won with great difficulty, and that genuine superiority which develops its brilliant creations after a magnificent plan. But it appears to me, that one should apply the same process of valuation to musical works, which is bestowed upon material relations in other departments of the Fine-Arts, and according to which, for instance, in painting, a picture twenty inches square, as the *Vision of Ezekiel*, or the *Cemetery* by Ruysdale, is numbered among the master-works which are valued more highly than many a painting of larger dimensions, even though produced by a Rubens or a Tintoretto. In Literature, is Béranger any the less a great poet because he confined his thought to the narrow limits of the song? Does not Petrarch owe his triumph to his sonnets? And how few of those probably, who frequently read his charming rimes know of the existence of his larger poem on *Africa*?

The prejudice which contested the pre-eminence of Franz Schubert as a composer, as compared with those who had composed the smooth melodies in the scores of many operas, scarcely worthy of mention, must gradually vanish. In music also, will be brought into account the talent for various kinds of composition, and the eloquence with which the thoughts and feelings are expressed, without taking into consideration the space and means for their expression. It would lead me too far to enter here into an analysis of Chopin's complete works (a catalogue of which, arranged according to the number of the opus, will be found at the end of this volume). As this would require the writing of a special treatise, I must therefore be satisfied to take a general survey of his work and to throw light especially upon the species of his piano compositions, for the origin and perfection of which we are indebted to his genius. Two kinds of influences act upon the human mind—the internal and external. The internal consist of the innate mental energy of the individual, the external originate in the love of country and the family recollections amid which the mind has been gradually developed. From the union of these two arises the man's

individuality, which has been continually subject and sensitive to the influences affecting it—that is, his thoughts and actions. Individuality cannot shield its work against influences nor change itself; for, even though it might be inclined to take another direction, the combination arising therefrom would only serve to top off the complete structure, but could never destroy the original forms. Traces of the former influences would ever remain patent.

It is interesting to observe how Chopin's talent developed and became gradually transformed under the impress of the different schools in which he was educated as a composer. Subject to no special tendency, to the opinions of no man of the time, however great, he gave Hummel some little preference for a short time only, by taking him as a model, especially in his manner of phrasing. The influence of this master is felt here and there in most of Chopin's works, while he has shown at all times a certain individuality in the choice of his thoughts. His obligations to Hummel appear especially in his rondos, but in return for that, there is revealed even in his Don Juan Variations, and in his Fantasia on Polish songs, that boldness and newness of thought, that independence in elaboration and originality of invention, which at once assigned to Chopin a distinguished place among contemporaneous composers. His individuality has united youthful elegance with sensibility, grace with energy, hope with a certain sadness, and all this indeed, so lavishly, that it gives me the best proof of that inexhaustible fountain concealed within his mind. Indeed the richness of his ideas was so great that he was accustomed, as was mentioned in a review of his youthful works, in the first volume, never to repeat the same thought, but he knew how to lend it, at its frequent recurrence, a continually renewed interest, partly by the most exquisite arabesques, partly by harmoniously chosen variations. He could make, effectively and with good taste, every kind of ornament or *fleur-de-lis* which distinguishes the old Italian methods of singing. Chopin's earliest works are doubtless the result of the musical tendency which prevailed at that time; the well-known traditional

forms opened for him the door to the temple in which the greatest masters of the piano had taken their places. But how much of the novelty and individuality which characterize his own creative talent could he, even at that time, have added to these forms! Chopin's imagination grasped deeper than had hitherto been customary among piano composers; it opened a new era for us (as he himself wrote to Elsner), and shaped its own way, not in order to appear more original than others, but because the originality and novelty of his ideas forced him to it without his knowledge. Occasionally, during his youth, he made use of the orchestra; in later life, only once in the *Polonaise* (op. 22), that brilliant composition, written throughout in E-flat major, but opening with an incomparably delicate and fantastic introduction in G-major. A certain timidity is frequently apparent in the choice of his orchestral coloring, which may be accounted for perhaps by his insufficient acquaintance with the use of individual instruments. He manifested a preference for the violoncello; the elegiac sound of this instrument was in sympathy with his own nature. Besides the *polonaise* (op. 3), he composed with Franchomme, a duet for piano and violoncello, on motives from "*Robert le Diable*" (a work of no particular musical value, pandering especially to the fashion of the day), and a short time before his death the G-minor Sonata (op. 65), whose first theme is singularly beautiful. Among his works for piano only, his Sonatas, as his most extensive production, next demand our attention. The first of these published as op. 4 and dedicated to his teacher Elsner, reveals the desire to indulge in classical forms. The composer fails, however, to convince us, that he was inspired by inward impulse to enter this province; his wish and his capacity appear to be unequal and hence our interest for this first work is not sufficiently excited to be lasting. The third movement is, at all events, the most noticeable, but even this does not completely satisfy us; it appears somewhat forced, as if Chopin had labored more in composing it than was his custom. The unusual rhythm of the 5-4 time, may perhaps have been the cause of this. Of far greater value is the Sonata in B-flat

minor (op. 35). The anxiety expressed in the first movement contrasts happily with the rich flowing melody of the second. Such a funeral march as this work contains, could only be produced by one in whose soul the pain and mourning of a whole nation had re-echoed. The much more passionate B-minor Sonata (op. 58) is better suited by virtue of its brilliant ornamentation to concert performances. Its richness in ideas is so great that it was difficult for the composer to keep within requisite bounds—a circumstance which is most perceptible in the *Adagio*. In the elaboration of the first movement in the first theme there is lacking a certain unity of repose, which first appears with the wonderful cantilena in D-major. In general, strict forms are less favorable to Chopin's mode of expression; they restrained him and not infrequently checked the flight of his otherwise bold fancy. His power of invention and richness of melody, were always so great that he entered reluctantly upon the systematic elaboration of his themes; for this reason his Sonatas, considered with reference to form, do not always appear completely finished. But within the bounds which were more favorable to the unimpeded development of his ideas, his sparkling fancy played more freely. Chopin cultivated dance-music (mazourkas, polonaises, waltzes, tarantelles, *krakowiaks* and *boleros*); he was the first who truly idealized this kind of composition. It is difficult to say to which, among the great number of mazourkas, the crown belongs. Individual taste has here so wide a field, that a perfect agreement is scarcely possible. Among the most successful of his dance-pieces which are apparently contradictory, because of their partly joyous, partly melancholy character, although always marked by their pregnant rhythm, we may without doubt include: Op. 7, No. 2 and 3; op. 17, No. 1 and 2; op. 24, No. 2; op. 30, No. 3; op. 33, No. 4. Worthy of especial mention are the mazourkas op. 24, No. 4; op. 50, No. 3; and op. 63, No. 3, which besides its poetical charm, is distinguished also by contrapuntal elegances. A few mazourkas are almost overpowering, although they cannot conceal a tinge of melancholy.

It is as if the composer had been diverted only into a momentary

joyousness and wished to stupefy himself with narcotics, that he might fall back only the more sorrowfully into his original melancholy. This type of mazourkas is most admirably marked in op. 56, No. 2. Concerning the origin of the polonaise, the *Volksmund* says: "When the dynasty of the Jagiellons became extinct, a son of Catharine de Medici, Henry of Anjou, who afterward reigned under the name of Henry the Third, was chosen King of Poland in 1573. When he came to Cracow in the following year, and received the national representatives in the most solemn manner in the castle, the gentlemen led their wives, filing before the King with measured step to the time of music. This custom was repeated at each election of a foreign prince to the throne, until it gradually developed into the Polish national dance, "Polonaise," which has been retained in Europe to the present day. There is much of seriousness and dignity in the gliding movement of the polonaise; the turning and changing reproduce, not inadequately, the hum of the people's voices and the active life of the old Polish nobility. At that time they always wore in the dance the sabre called "Carabella." The Prince Michael Oginski was the first, and after him Kurpinski, who gave to their polonaises an artistic coloring, which obtained a certain distinction for them, even in the musical world; afterward, other composers not belonging to Poland, for example, Beethoven, Schubert, Weber, Spohr, etc., produced them as an independent musical form and composed works according to this model, until finally Chopin enobled them with his own poetry and ideal beauty, and filled them again with a meaning of a distinctively Polish nationality. Chopin's polonaises might be divided into two groups, one of which displays an excessively martial element with pregnant rhythm, while the other reveals that melancholy, dreamy sentiment peculiar to Chopin. The polonaises in A-major (op. 40, No. 1), F-sharp (op. 44) and A-flat major (op. 53) may be numbered in the first class. In respect to simplicity of form and the national element which characterizes it, the A-major Polonaise is superior to the others; although of little musical value and lacking in poetical feeling—it is carried

almost throughout *in forte* and is without special contrasts in the movements—still it becomes effective through its heroic bearing and natural nobility. The F-sharp minor Polonaise, dedicated to Princess Beauvan, sister of Countess Delphine Potocka, is decidedly the most sublime and the boldest in thought. The principal movement is of sombre coloring and wild defiance and is interrupted in a surprising manner by a charming intermezzo in mazourka-style. Truly wonderful in its effect is the dreamy conclusion of this composition, where in the continuous C-sharp of the right hand, with which again and again the semitone D, as if complaining, joins in as a heavy grace note, the original, energetic theme of the left hand dies away into the softest *piano*. The A-flat major Polonaise, full of majestic dignity, was composed in 1840 after his return from the island of Majorca. Chopin's nervous system had been so much affected by his recent illness that for a long time his restless imagination made refreshing sleep impossible. One night while he was playing in his own room, the work which he had just finished, it suddenly seemed to him that the doors were opened, and a great band of Polish Knights and noble ladies in ancient costumes (*robe ronde et cornettes*) entered and filed past him. This vision filled him with such terror that he fled from the room through the opposite door and did not venture to return to his home again during the entire night. The middle movement in E-major, with its ever increasing *crescendo*, does indeed remind one of an approaching troop of Knights which dash over a plain faintly lighted by the moon's rays, so that one fancies one hears the hoofs of the fiery steeds and the clinking of the steel armors and swords. The second group comprises the polonaises in C-sharp and E-flat minor (op. 26), the C-minor polonaise (op. 40, No. 2) and the three in D-minor, B-major and F-minor (op. 71), published by Fontana. The two first mentioned (dedicated to J. Dessauer), display remarkably fine sentiment. They originated at a period when Chopin had reached the summit of his greatness, when his mind undisturbed by petty considerations of form, and by the force of its own originality created independently for itself those

forms which corresponded best with the thoughts to be expressed. The first polonaise in C-sharp minor especially is not only distinguished by incomparably noble melody, but there is a rare fullness of character in the first movements, apparently so defiantly incoherent, with which this work begins. While the first movement in a splendid, rhythmical strain, utters manly defiance softened by a passionately erotic love-theme, the measured slowness of the following movement contrasts strikingly with it, suppressing all passion which flashes like lightning only through the fiery passages of the right hand, until the first-cited principal motive in D-flat major leads the lovely melody to a tranquil close. None of the subsequent polonaises contain a counter melody, as in the conclusion of this work. The second polonaise in the same opus (F-flat minor) is full of mystery, gloom and horror, and appears as if it were intended to portray the wretchedness of his exiled countrymen, languishing in iron chains in Siberia. The *Fantaisie-Polonaise* in A-flat major, occupies a place distinct from these two groups. It is intended to represent the national contentions and struggles, and closes therefore, with a pompous, hymn-like song of triumph. Chopin's firm conviction, that after so many severe trials, certain victory awaited the Polish nation—a feeling which is admirably portrayed in the poetry of Mickiewicz, Krasinski, and often of Slowicki, the greatest poets of that period—is expressed most vividly in this, the last-finished of his larger works for piano only. It would be idle to seek political or philosophic thoughts and deductions in music, allegory and history. Music holds sway over feeling only, speaks through and to this; but music is united by it with modern poetry, not only by the common, national sentiment, but by many, almost by all tones and shades. Thus, like poetry, Chopin's muse is a flower of the romantic, which presents the same charms as well as the same faults also, as our romantic poetry. Like this, it excites the highest and most intense feelings, is original and rich in ideas and forms; but it suffers from the same, often excessive sentimentality and melancholy which even frequently degenerates into complete nervous enervation.

Chopin's waltzes (op. 18, 34, 42, 64, 69 and 70) have, most of all his works, found their way among the people, partly because they make the least demands upon the technique of the player, and partly because they treat in general, the most popular dance-themes. Considered from a musical stand-point, they offer comparatively less that is interesting and novel than his remaining compositions. If they lose in their outlines the rhythm of the dance, they have won, by their natural charm and external brilliance, an importance which no other composer had yet been able to infuse into them. The highest interest belongs even in this class, to those members through which breathes that peculiar, fantastic air, which is the principal charm of Chopin's muse. These are the waltzes in A-minor and C-sharp minor; the latter inclines somewhat in the third and fourth measures to the mazourka—rhythm, which Chopin always cultivated with especial preference. The four ballads (op. 23, 38, 47 and 52), belong to the most splendid and original of his productions. They offer so much novelty and variety in form, that the critics were for a long time undecided, in which of the then existing categories they should number them. Some thought them a variety of the Rondo-form, others—and these approached nearer the truth, called them "*Poetical Tales*." Indeed a legendary tone runs through them, which distinguishes them essentially from all previous, conventional forms of musical expression, and is especially well represented in the 6-4 and 6-8 species of time. Chopin himself answered when he was questioned by Schumann, during his stay in Leipzig, concerning the meaning of the ballads, that inspired by some poems of Mickiewicz, he had been incited to create this new form. The first of these in G-minor (op. 23), perhaps the best known, glows with wild passionateness and charms especially by perfection of details, while the second and third bear an exceedingly idyllic character. The fourth, technically the most difficult, is perhaps for this reason, the least known. Critics, who in general (Robert Schumann excepted) judged Chopin's larger works unfavorably, have especially attacked this ballad. In my opinion it is plainly the most poetical and with

respect to its elaboration, the one in which he has most happily displayed his talent. Besides possessing skill of the highest order, the performer must be a musician of the finest taste, in order to bring out for the enjoyment of the listener, all the manifold beauties of the piece. At the first glance, the Nocturnes appear to incline for the most part toward the form already in vogue. Field, who was for a long time erroneously designated as Chopin's teacher—this error has already been mentioned in the first volume—undoubtedly created this form of music; but the difference between the two composers is proved by their very resemblance. Field is satisfied to write delicate, poetic and, in general, melancholy compositions, but Chopin not only brought the dramatic element into this form, he also displays in his nocturnes an increased fullness of harmony and a masterly management of the piano. If one compare, for example, Chopin's E-flat major nocturne (op. 9) with the nocturne in B-major by Field, the general difference will at once be discovered. Chopin's best numbers of this class are the nocturne (op. 15, No. 2) increased in *doppio movimento*, the charming one in D-flat major (op. 27), with an almost lavish fulness of the most delicate *floriture*, and further, that in G-minor (op. 37), complaining as it were in a fixed idea, and interrupted by solemn accords, whose consolation seems to remind us of the sombre rest of the grave. The middle movement of the following nocturne (op. 37, No. 2) is perhaps the most beautiful melody which Chopin ever wrote, and one which can not be heard without the deepest emotion and pleasure. Op. 48, No. 1 (C-minor) is lengthy and regarded with reference to its powerful middle movement, which is not of a nocturne character, is the most imposing of the pieces. The posthumous nocturne, published as op. 72, was composed in the year 1827, and evidently bears the stamp of that period of his youth. Op. 62, No. 2 (E-major), on the contrary, was composed a short time before Chopin's death, and once more reflects every harmonical delicacy as well as the sweetest melody and phantasy. The same almost may be said of the scherzos as was said of the ballads: they did not exist before

Chopin, at least, not in their present independence, filled with such impetuous daring, with almost Shakespearean humor. In the most celebrated of them (B-flat minor, op. 31), the first theme is wilfully dreary ; it does not, however, fall into melancholy, but defiantly soars aloft. Scarcely less beautiful is the second conception, in A-major, serious and full of expression.

One must estimate the great number of piano-compositions by the examples of that period, in order to appreciate fully, Chopin's rare plastic power in this respect. This scherzo, as well as the three others, are to-day so new and modern in piano-style, that it may perhaps be said of them, that they were almost thirty years in advance of their time. In demony and power the scherzos in B-minor (op. 20) and in C-sharp minor (op. 39), resemble the one in B-flat minor, while that in E-major (op. 54) shows a more kindly, amiable physiognomy. The rhythm of the scherzos, much more even than that of his mazourkas, reveals a certain spiritual opposition, an enchanting haughtiness. Since the dance-forms, which partly adhere to the mazourkas and polonaises, are completely effaced by the broad, melodious middle movements of the scherzos, the compositions in this form may really be regarded as a singularly true expression of Chopin's originality—outwardly firm, bold, racy, inwardly noble, charming and full of poetical fancies. The preludes (op. 28 and 45), as well as the four impromptus (op. 29, 36, 51 and 66) partly resemble nocturnes, (for example that in C-sharp minor, op. 45), rich in modulation, but unfortunately little known, as well as the D-flat major prelude, op. 28, No. 15, with the splendid middle movement in C-sharp minor ; of the impromptus, there is the one in F-sharp major, op. 36. They bear partly the character of etudes (as for example the A-flat major and G-flat major impromptus, the middle movement of which are pre-eminently melodious ; of the preludes further, op. 28, Nos. 1, 3, 8, 16, 19, 23). They are partly hastily dashed-off sketches in which the composer presents us, in spite of the small limits, with the most ingenious pictures of his moods. In some of these (for example, E-minor and

B-minor, he has left to posterity real pearls, which alone would be sufficient to immortalize his name as a musical poet.

Chopin has won especial merit by the perfection of his *etudes*. There are also among these (op. 10, 25, and "*Trois Nouvelles Etudes*") some of which serve pure technical ends (for example op. 10, Nos. 1, 2, 4, 8; op. 25, Nos. 6, 8, and of the "*Trois Nouvelles Etudes*" No. 3); we find others whose intellectual character is of eminent importance (for example, op. 10, Nos. 3, 9, 10, 12; op. 25, Nos. 1 and 7, and of the "*Trois Nouvelles Etudes*" No. 1).

The works published after Chopin's death, at Schlesinger's, in Berlin, by Fontana (Fantaisie Impromptu, op. 66, four mazourkas op. 67, four mazourkas op. 68, two waltzes op. 69, three waltzes op. 70, three polonaises op. 71, Nocturne, *Marche funebre*, three Ecossaises op. 72, rondo for two pianos, op. 73, sixteen Polish songs, op. 74) are for the most part of less importance with respect to their musical value, although some compositions are to be found among them which, like op. 66, are perhaps worthy to bear the name of the composer. Chopin wished these works to be destroyed after his death, at all events not to be given to the public. The last *Mazourka senza fine*, composed a few days before his death, is mournful—very mournful, like the close of our great master's life. He proved by this swan-song, as well as his longing for the home in which he had spent the happy years of his youth, that even in his last hour of musical inspiration he had remained faithful to the national music and the memory of his sorely-tried Fatherland.

Chopin composed the sixteen Polish songs without the slightest pretension. If he read anything beautiful in the national poetry of that day, he wrote music to it—for himself only, not for the public. These songs originated gradually in this way in the period between 1824 and 1844. Many have been lost, because the composer, in spite of the requests of his friends, always delayed to put them upon paper; others are sung in Poland, while nothing is known positively concerning their origin; but it is presumed with tolerable certainty that Chopin composed them. To these may be added the popular

song: "*The Third of May*," formerly much sung. Musically unimportant, it could not be supposed that these songs should be spread beyond the limits of Poland. They sprang from the seed of the blossoms of modern patriotic poetry, which were scattered as if by chance upon Chopin's susceptible soul; simple flowers, which do not dazzle, but delight the sensitive heart by their sweet fragrance and peculiar delicacy.

APPENDIX.

CHOPIN'S LETTERS

EIGHT LETTERS TO TITUS WOYCIECHOWSKI.

I give in conclusion a few letters written by Chopin within the years 1828-31, to his friend, Titus Woyciechowski, which I did not think necessary to be mentioned in his biography.

I.

WARSAW, Saturday, December 27, 1828.

MY DEAREST FRIEND:

I have delayed until this moment, when friendship has triumphed over indolence, to write to you, but now I take my pen, even though I am sleepy, in order that these lines may reach you by the first or fourth of January. I shall not fill my letters with many compliments, specific wishes or common-place witticisms, because you know me, and I, you. Seek in that the cause of my silence and the brevity of this letter. The score of my Rondo a la Krakowiak is finished. The *Introduction* appears almost as droll as I in my "*flausch*."* The *Trio*, however, is not yet finished. My parents have just furnished a little room for me, into which a stairway leads directly from the entrance-hall. I am to have an old secretary in it, and this nook is to be my retreat. The Rondo for two pianos, that orphan-child, has found a step-father in Fontana (perhaps you have seen him with me—he attends the University); he studied the Rondo more than a month; he learned it, however, in that time, and not long ago we rehearsed

*This was a very long winter-coat for a boy, in which, according to the assurance of his friends, Frederic played a highly comical figure.

it at Buchholtz', to see how it would sound. I say "*would*" advisedly, because the instruments were not tuned alike and our fingers were stiff; we have therefore obtained no adequate impression of the work. For a week I have composed nothing that would be worthy of God and man. I run from Ananias to Caiaphas: this evening I am at Madame W——d's; from there I drive to Fraulein Kicka's, to a musical soiree. You know how pleasant it is, when one is tired, to be compelled to improvise. I have not often such happy thoughts as came sometimes from beneath my fingers when I was with you. And in addition to this, everywhere miserable instruments. I have not even found one, which in mechanism and tone, comes near being equal to our own or your sister's. Yesterday the Polish Theatre was opened with "*Preciosa*." The French have given "*Rataplan*;" to-day, there is to be the "*Geldhab*" by Fredro; to-morrow, Auber's "*Maurer und Schlosser*." Some one told me lately that you had written to him. Do not think I am offended because you have not written to me for so long a time. I know you, and letter-writing is not of so much importance to me. If I have scribbled so much nonsense again to-day, it is only to remind you that I keep you in my heart as of old, and that I am still the same Fritz. You do not like to be kissed; but you must allow me this to-day. We all wish for your mother the best health and happiness. Zywny sends you a cordial greeting.

Your FREDERIC.

II.

WARSAW, April 10, 1830.

(*The anniversary of Emilie's death.*)*

I have intended for weeks to write to you, but have not succeeded. I know not how it happens that time now passes so quickly for me. You must know that our musical season has now reached its height; not even Holy-week has been respected. Last Monday there was a large *soiree* at Philips', at which Madame Sauran sang a duet

*Emilie was Chopin's youngest sister.

from "*Semiramis*," very beautifully; I accompanied Soliva and Gresser in a bouffée-duet from Rossini's "*Der Turke in Italien*," which, by general request, had to be repeated. I have already made out the program for the *soiree* at Lewicki's, in which, among others, Prince Galizin is to play a quartet by Rode. I am to play "*La Sentinelle*," by Hummel, and for the conclusion, shall select my Polonaise with violoncello, to which I have composed an Adagio as introduction. I have already tried it; it does not sound badly. These are the latest musical items of the salons: now I come to the newspapers, which are not less important to me, since they judge me very favorably; I would like to send them to you. In an article, two columns long, in the "*Warsaw Gazette*," there are, of course, many thrusts at Elsner. Soliva told me that he only avoided the newspaper quarrel because two of his lady pupils were soon to appear in public concerts, otherwise he would surely have answered these attacks. It is difficult to represent the whole affair to you in a few words; if I could, I would send you the paper, that the matter might be quite clear to you. A clever head will comprehend it in a word; I shall, therefore, briefly indicate the question to you.

Many criticisms appeared after my concerts. If they, especially that of the "*Polish Courier*," contained very high praise of myself, I still could endure it. The official journal also devoted a few columns to my praise; but one number contains among other things—although they be well meant—such stupidities, that I was completely in despair, until I had read the answer in the "*Gazetta Poleska*," which justly takes away from me again what the other in its exaggeration had wrongly ascribed to me. It is declared, namely, in this article, that as the Germans are proud of their Mozart, so one day will the Poles be proud of me—simple nonsense! But still more; it says further, that "if I had fallen into the hands of a pedant or a Rossinist (this stupid expression!), I might never have become what I am, so to speak, at present." Although I am certainly still nothing, the critic is yet so far right, that if I had not studied with Elsner, I would accomplish still less than I do in fact. This taunt, "Rossinist,"

and the praise of Elsner, who, as it is said, educated one pupil, has as you may know, excited great indignation,* so great indeed, that some one began in the "*Warsaw Gazette*," with the comedy "*Die Freunde*" by Fredro, ended with the "*Grafen Ory*," and in the middle asks, "Why should he feel grateful to Elsner, since he cannot produce pupils at pleasure?" and adds (in my second concert, the symphony by Nowakowski was played) that "not even the devil can make something out of nothing."

Thirty-five years ago, Elsner wrote a quartet, which bears the title, "*Dans Le Meilleur Gout Polonaise*;" the publisher, without Elsner's knowledge, attached this title to the minuet contained therein, which has a Polish character. Now the reviewer ridicules this quartet, without mentioning the composer. Soliva quite justly says that the "*Caecilia*"† might be made ridiculous with the same right, particularly since, with all kindness and delicacy, they have given me a few side-thrusts in the article, and offer the good advice that I ought perhaps to hear Rossini, but not to copy him. But at all events, this has come to pass on account of the article, in which it is said, that I possess much originality.

I am invited to Minasowicz‡ to an Easter-morning breakfast, which is day after to-morrow; Kurpinski is to be there, also. I am really curious how the latter will act toward me. You can not imagine how kindly he always greets me. I saw him a week ago Wednesday, at the concert of little Leskiewicz. The latter does not play badly, nevertheless one can still discern the pupil in him. As it appears to me, he will become a better player than Kurpinski; I have not yet ventured, however, to express this judgment, although I have already been tempted to do it.

Ah, the postman! A letter * * * * from you! O, my dear fellow, how good you are! It is no wonder, for indeed I am always thinking

*The kapell-meister Kurpinski is meant here; he was called *Rossinist* by many, because he almost always gave Rossini's operas. The above-mentioned anonymous article in the "*Warsaw Gazette*" was, at all events, written by him.

†"*Caecilia Piaseczzriska*," a Polish national opera, by Kurpinski.

‡A Polish poet, who died 1849.

of you. As I learn from your letter, you have seen only the "*Warsaw Courier*;" if you can, read the "*Polish Courier*" also, and No. 91 of the "*Warsaw Gazette*." Your advice is good; for that reason I declined some invitations for the evening, as if I had anticipated it, for I think of you many times in all that I ever undertake. I know not whether it be because with you I learned to feel and perceive; but if I compose anything, I wish to know if it please you, and I believe that my Second Concerto (E-minor) will have no value for me until you have heard it and pronounced it good. Concerning my second appearance before the public, which is here counted upon, this will not take place for the present, but only a short time before my departure. I intend to play the new Concerto, which is not yet finished; then, if requested, the Fantaisie upon Polish Songs, and the Variations which I dedicated to you, and for which I am impatiently waiting, as the Leipzig mass is already begun, and Brzezina is just about to receive a large amount of music. The Frenchman from Petersburg, who wished to entertain me with champagne after my second concert, and was supposed to be Field, is a pupil of the Paris Conservatory, and is called Dunst. He gave several concerts in Petersburg, which met with great approval; he must, therefore, play remarkably well. This, forsooth, seems strange to you: a Frenchman from Petersburg, who has, moreover, a German name. By-the-by, to the sad news there still belongs this, that Orlowski has made mazourkas and galops out of my themes, but I have begged him not to have them published.

III.

WARSAW, April 17, 1830.

(Papa's birth-day.)

I feel relieved of my intolerable longing whenever I receive a letter from you; to-day I more than ever needed this consolation. I would like to frighten away the thoughts which poison my joyousness, but in spite of this, it is pleasant to amuse myself with them; I do not know what is the matter with me. * * * * Perhaps I shall be

calmer after finishing this letter. You say that perhaps you will come; this rejoices me greatly, as I shall remain to the Diet. You already know, of course, from the papers, that this will open on the 28th of this month and continue a whole month. The "*Warsaw Courier*" has announced the arrival of Sonntag. The editor, Dmusewski is incorrigible; he invents some adventure and publishes it with the preface, "We learn from reliable sources," etc. When I met him yesterday, he told me that he intended to accept for the *Courier* a sonnet dedicated to me. I begged him for God's sake not to commit this folly. "Already printed!" he replied, with a smile, believing that I would be greatly delighted and feel honored. O, the importunities of friendship! Now, those who envy me will have another occasion for abuse. With regard to the Mazourkas composed over my concert motives, the commercial greed of lucre has gained the ascendancy: they are actually published. I wish to read nothing more that men will write about me now. Last week I had an idea of visiting you for a few days; but nothing came of it, because I was prevented by the work which I had begun. I must apply myself with all my might, in order to finish my compositions. If you are in Warsaw during the Diet, you will come in time for my concert; I have a presentiment that you will, and if now I only dream it, I will firmly believe it.* How often do I mistake the night for the day, and the day for the night; how often do I live in dreams and sleep in the day! It is worse than if I slept, because I feel always the same; and instead of gaining strength in this stupor as well as in sleep, I am so afflicted and tormented that I am not really strengthened. I pray you, love me * * * * .

IV.

WARSAW, June 5, 1830.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

You have already missed five of Sonntag's concerts. But if it be true that you will come on the 13th, you will yet be able to hear her

*Another proof of Chopin's tendency to superstition.

a few times. The 13th, it seems, will be Sunday. You will arrive just about the time that I shall be practicing at home, the allegro of the Second Concerto. I take advantage, I must tell you, of the time when Sonntag will be absent; she has told me with her own pretty lips, that she is going to Fischbach* at the invitation of the king of Prussia, but from there she will return to us again. I can not tell you what a great pleasure the intimate acquaintance of this "one sent by God" (as some enthusiasts justly call her) has given me. Prince Anton Radziwill presented me to her, for which I am heartily grateful to him. I have, alas! profited little by her week's stay with us, and I saw how she was taxed by the wearisome visits of senators, palatines, castellans, ministers, generals and adjutants, who only sat there and stared into her eyes, while she talked of things which were wholly indifferent. She receives all these very kindly, because she is so kind-hearted that she cannot be unamiable to any one. Yesterday, when she wished to put on her hat to go to a rehearsal, she was obliged actually to lock herself in her room, because the servant in the entrance-hall was unable to turn away the great number of persons who presented themselves. I would not have gone to her if she had not sent for me, because Radziwill had requested me to transcribe a song which he had arranged for her. It is Variations upon an Ukrainian Folk-song (Dumka). The theme and finale are beautiful, but the middle-movement does not please me (and it is still less pleasing to Sonntag); it is true I have changed it somewhat, but it is still good for nothing. I am glad that she leaves after to-day's concert, as I am then free from that anxiety, and in the meantime, Radziwill comes at the close of the Diet and will perhaps renounce his Variations.

Sonntag is not beautiful, but fascinating in the highest degree; she charms every one with her voice, which is, in truth, not very strong, but splendidly cultivated. Her *diminuendo* is the *ne plus ultra* of anything that one can hear; her *portamento* is wonderfully

*A castle of the king of Prussia, very delightfully situated at the foot of the *Riesengebirge*.

beautiful, her chromatic scales, particularly in their height, unattainable. She sang for us an aria by Mercadante, very, very beautifully; and the Variations by Rode, especially the final roudades, more than excellently. The Variations upon a Swiss theme pleased so much that she was obliged, having several times acknowledged the applause, to sing it from the beginning. She had a like experience yesterday, in the last Variation by Rode. She also sang the Cavatine from the "*Barbier*," as well as some arias from the "*Diebische Elster*," and "*Freyschutz*;" now, you yourself, will be convinced what a difference there is between this performance and those which hitherto have been heard here. I was with her once when Soliva came with the Misses Gladkowska and Wolkow, who were to sing his duet before her, which ends with the words "*barbara sorte*;" do you remember it? Sonntag expressed herself thus far to me in confidence, that both voices are beautiful but somewhat too shrill, and that the ladies must change their method of singing completely, if they do not wish to risk the complete loss of their voices within two years. She said to Fraulein Wolkow in my presence that she possessed much ease and taste, but that she had "*une voix trop aigue*." She invited both in the most cordial manner to visit her frequently, while she promised to make every effort to explain and instruct them in her own manner of singing. That is quite an unusual courtesy! Aye, I even believe that it is so great a coquetry, that it made upon me the impression of naturalness and a certain *naïveté*, for one can scarcely believe that a human being can be so natural, if he does not know all the resources of coquetry. Sonntag is a hundred times more beautiful and attractive in *neglige* than in gala-dress; those, however, who have not seen her in the morning, are also charmed by her beautiful appearance in concert. If she returns, she will give concerts until the 22nd of this month, then she intends to go to Petersburg; this I know from her, herself. Hasten, therefore, my dear fellow, and come at once, that you may miss no more than the five concerts which she has already given. There is much said about Pasta's coming, and that the two artists will sing together;

there is also a French lady staying here, Miss Belleville, who plays the piano very well—very lightly, very elegantly and ten times better than Worlitzer ; she is to give a concert next Wednesday. She took part in the famous “*soiree musicale*” at court, in which Sonntag sang ; Worlitzer also played there, but did not please much, as I heard from Kurpinski, who accompanied Sonntag on the piano. Many wondered that I was not invited to play, but I was not astonished at it.

Something further concerning Sonntag. She has many entirely new embellishments in her execution, with which she produces great effect, but not such as Paganini. Perhaps the reason lies in this, that it is a lighter kind. It seems as if she were exhaling the fragrance of a fresh bouquet of flowers upon the *parterre*, and now caresses her own voice, now jests with it, but she seldom moves one to tears. Radziwill thinks, on the contrary, that she plays and sings the last scene of Desdemona in “*Othello*” in such a manner that no one can restrain tears. I asked her this morning, if she will not sing this scene once for us in costume (she is said to be an excellent actress) ; she answered me, that it is true that she has often seen tears in the eyes of the spectators, but that playing upon the stage exhausts her, and she had determined to appear upon the boards as seldom as possible. Only come here to find rest from your rural cares ; Sonntag will sing something for you, and you will awaken to new life—you will gather new strength for your work. It is a pity that I can not send myself, instead of this letter. Miss Belleville played my printed Variations in Vienna ; she plays one of them from memory. Sonntag is to sing something to-day from “*Semiramis*.” Her concerts are short ; at each she sings, generally, four numbers ; the intervals are filled only by the orchestra. Indeed one is obliged to rest after her singing, so great is the effect which it produces, so much does she interest as an artiste.

V.

WARSAW, *I think*, September 4, 1830.

I tell you, I always have mad freaks ; I am still tarrying here, and can not decide to fix definitely the day for my departure. I have constantly a presentiment that I am leaving Warsaw, never again to return to my home ; I have the conviction that I am saying farewell forever to my native country. O, how hard it must be to die in some other place than where one was born ! It would be hard for me to see, instead of the dear faces of my relatives, an indifferent physician, and a hired servant at my death-bed. Believe me, dear Titus, I wish often that I might come to you, there to seek rest for my anxious heart ; but since that is not possible, I often hurry out into the street, without knowing why. But even there, nothing will silence nor divert my longing : I return to the house only to be filled anew with unutterable yearning. I have not yet tried my Concerto ; in any event I shall abandon all my treasures before Michaelmas.* In Vienna I shall be condemned to ceaseless sighing and pining. This comes from having no longer a free heart. You so well understand this indescribable power ; can you explain to me the peculiar feeling of a man who is always expecting something better from the coming day, than the past one has bestowed on him ? "Do not be so foolish ;" this is the only answer that I can give to myself. If you know a better one, then pray, pray tell it to me.

My plans for the winter are as follows : I intend to remain two months in Vienna, then to go to Italy, and if it can not be otherwise, to spend the winter in Milan. Soliva always directs the operas now in which his lady pupils appear : he will, in time, I believe, supplant Kurpinski ; he already has one foot in the stirrup and is supported by a bearded trooper.†

I close my letter to-day with nothing, indeed with still less than nothing, i. e., with that which I have already written ; it is already half-

*Reference to his liking for Frä. Gladkowska.

†This reference is to General Rezniecki, at that time President of the National Theatre in Warsaw.

past eleven o'clock, and I still sit here in complete *neglige*, while Mariolka is surely waiting for me, to accompany me to C.'s to dinner; then I have promised Magnuszewski to visit him. I could not, therefore, succeed in filling these lines out before four o'clock, and the blank paper vexes me. But I will not excite myself needlessly, else I should not easily recover myself, and finally, what is worse, disappoint Mariolka. As you know, I wish to be courteous and grateful to people of whose good wishes I am convinced. I have not yet called upon her since my return, and I must confess to you, quite frankly, that I often put the cause of my sorrow on her; it appears to me as if people shared this opinion with me, and this affords me at least a certain outward satisfaction. My father smiles at it; but if he knew everything, he would perhaps weep. I am apparently quite contented, while my heart * * * * *.

This day four weeks, you, my dear fellow, will receive from me no letter from Warsaw, nor from any other place, perhaps—it may be that you will hear nothing from me until we meet again. All that I am able to write you now, is, indeed, nonsense. My only thought is to get away from Warsaw.—But wait: some day it may not be better even with you. Man is not always happy. Often there are only a few moments of happiness allotted him in this life; then why try to escape this passion which can not last long? Thus while I, on the one hand, regard intercourse with the outer world as a sacred duty, I esteem it, on the other, a devilish invention, and it were better if men—but enough. Time flies; I must wash and dress—do not kiss me now, but you would not kiss me indeed, even if I anointed myself with Byzantine oils—unless I should compel you to it through magnetism. Farewell.

VI.

WARSAW, September 18, 1830.

I do not know for what reason, really, I am still here; but the place is so delightful to me, and my parents are entirely agreed that I should remain. Last Wednesday I tried my Concerto with a

quartet accompaniment, but I was not quite satisfied with it. Those who were present at the rehearsal, say that the *finale* is the most successful movement (probably because it is the most easily comprehended). How it will sound with a full orchestra, I can only write you next week, as I shall play it in this form for the first time on Wednesday. To-morrow, I shall have one more rehearsal with the quartet, then I go—whither? I am really attracted nowhere. But at all events, I do not intend to remain in Warsaw. If you have a suspicion that something precious chains me here, you err, like many others. I assure you that I would be ready to make any sacrifice if it concerned only myself, and I—although I am in love—had still to keep this unhappy feeling concealed within my soul for a few years longer.

I do not wish that we should travel together, for at the moment when we shall meet and embrace each other for the first time in foreign lands, I shall rejoice with my whole heart; it will be worth more to me than a thousand monotonous days spent with you upon the journey. I intend to write a Polonaise for orchestra; I have as yet, however, only outlined it in my mind. When it will see the light, I know not. The "*Vienna Gazette*," contained a kind criticism upon my Variations, brief but comprehensive, and so philosophically treated that it is almost impossible to translate it. It says, in conclusion, that the Variations have, besides the external adornment, a real intrinsic value, which will not merely be of passing interest, but will always remain. This is certainly a fine compliment for which I shall thank the reviewer as soon as I see him. I was heartily rejoiced by this article, which contains nothing extravagant, because in it my independence was acknowledged. If it were to any other than you, I would not write so frankly; but since we are such intimate friends, I may be allowed to praise myself for once, as merchants are wont to do with their wares.

The new ballet, for which Orłowski has written the music, will be given for the first time to-day. Much is said about its peculiarities; the machinery which has been devised for it, is said to be astonishing.

Yesterday I attended a baptismal anniversary at "fatty" C.'s; I played Spohr's Quintet for piano, clarinette, bassoons, French horns and flutes.* It is wondrously beautiful, but not entirely adapted to the piano. Everything that Spohr has written for the piano is very difficult; often indeed one can discover no principle of fingering for his runs. The Quintet was to begin at seven o'clock; it was eleven, however, before we began. You will surely be surprised that I did not fall asleep. There was a good reason, however, for that; there was, I mean, a very beautiful young lady among the guests who reminded me of my Ideal. Only think: I remained there until three o'clock at night! I was to go this day week by the Cracow diligence to Vienna, but I have finally abandoned this idea—you understand why. You may be firmly convinced that I am no egotist, but as much as I love you, I am willing to make sacrifices also for other people. I say, for people; but in nowise for outward show, for public opinion, which is dear to us, but truly does not influence me, calls it a misfortune if one wear a torn coat, or a shabby hat, etc. If my career proves a failure, and I perhaps, some beautiful day, have nothing to eat, then you must engage me as secretary at Poturzyn.† I shall be just as happy there in a stable, as I was last summer in your castle. So long as I am merry and well, I will willingly work, my whole life through. I have often thought whether I am really indolent, or whether I might work more without over-taxing my physical strength. Without jesting, I have convinced myself that I am not yet the greatest sluggard that ever was, and that I am able to work twice as much as I do now, if necessity should demand it. It often happens that he who wishes to improve an opinion already formed of him, makes it worse; but I believe that I can neither improve nor impair your opinion, even if I do praise myself now and then. The sympathy which I have with you, compels your heart also to the same sympathetic feeling toward me. You are not master of

*This is exactly the succession given by Chopin.

†The name of Woyciechowski's estate, where he still resides.

your thoughts, but I control mine ; when I have once taken one such into my head, I allow it to be taken away from me just as little as the trees allow themselves to be robbed of their green attire, which lends them the charm and freshness of life. With me, it will be green even in winter, that is, only in my mind ; but—I call God to witness—in my heart the most glowing heat, so that one need not marvel that the vegetation be so luxuriant. Enough—yours ever.—I notice now, for the first time, that I have chattered too much nonsense. You see, that the impression which was received yesterday, is not yet obliterated ; that I have not slept it away ; that I am still tired, because I danced many mazourkas. I tie your letters with a little ribbon which my Ideal once gave me. It gladdens me that the two lifeless things, letters and ribbon, agree so well ; probably because even if they do not know each other, they still feel that they both came from a hand dear to me.

VII.

WARSAW, September 22, 1830.

To-day, I must first of all, explain to you how it happens that I am still here. My father was unwilling, two weeks ago, that I should set out upon my journey, because disturbances are prevailing in all Germany : in the Rhine-provinces, Darmstadt, Brunswick, Cassel and Saxony, where the new king has already mounted the throne. We have heard also that in Vienna thousands are agitated over the bread-riot ; what the trouble really is with regard to this matter, I know not—that they are contending over this point, is certain. It is unquiet in the Tyrol, also. In Italy, matters are at the boiling-point, and important news is expected from there every moment. I have not yet concerned myself about a pass, but it is thought that I can receive one only to Austria or Prussia ; one to Italy and France is not to be thought of, and I know that to some, a pass of any kind, whatsoever, has been wholly refused. I shall probably go in a few weeks by way of Cracow to Vienna, for there they have been again reminded of me, and one ought to strike the iron while it is hot.

P. was with me yesterday; he will leave early to-morrow morning, and as I am to have a rehearsal of my second Concerto to-day with the entire orchestra (excepting the trumpets and kettle-drums), I have invited him to be present, that I might give you a pleasure. How, and what it is, he will inform you. I know that in this respect, the smallest details will interest you. I earnestly regret that you are not here; Kurpinski, Soliva, and the most select of the musical world will be present; I have not much confidence, however, in their ability for musical criticism—Elsner excepted, of course. Moreover, I am curious to see how the kapell-meister will regard the Italian, Czapek Kessler, Philip Dobrzynski, Molsdorf Kaczynski, Ledoux Soltyk, and how P. will regard us all. It has never before happened that all these gentlemen have assembled at one place; I alone have succeeded in bringing this about, and I do it only for curiosity's sake. I regret very much that I must write upon a day when I can not perfectly collect my thoughts. When I think about myself, I am filled with melancholy, and could almost lose my reason; when I am absorbed in thought—which often happens with me—the horses could trample upon me without my noticing it, which did almost happen day before yesterday. In the church, I met the glance of my Ideal, and in a moment of delicious stupefaction, I ran at once into the street, and it was almost a quarter of an hour before I could recover my consciousness; I am sometimes so insane that I am terrified at myself. I would like to send you a few trifling pieces which I have just composed; but I do not know if I shall be able to copy them to-day. I beg earnestly that you will pardon this hastily-written letter; I have still to hurry to Elsner, to assure myself that he will come to the rehearsal. Then I must see to the desk, and the sordines, which I totally forgot yesterday; without these, the Adagio would be utterly insignificant, and its success doubtful. The Rondo is effective, the first Allegro powerful.

Accursed egotism! And if anyone is to blame that I am conceited it is you, egotist; he who associates with such a man, becomes himself like him. But in one respect, I am still unlike you; namely, I can

never form a quick resolution ; but I have the firm determination and the secret intention, Saturday week, **without** permission, in spite of all lamentations, of weeping and wailing, really to go away. The music in the trunk, the before-mentioned ribbon upon my heart, my soul filled with cares : and thus I start away in the stage-coach. Everywhere in the city tears will surely flow in torrents : from the Copernicus to the fountain, from the Bank to the monument of King Sigismund ; but I shall be cold and unfeeling as a stone, and laugh at all who would take such a heart-rending farewell of me.

VIII.

PARIS, December 25, 1831.

For the second time, my dear Titus, I am obliged to congratulate you from the remotest distance upon your name-day ; * a glance, a pressure of the hand, would tell you more than ten letters. I shall, therefore, not make many words ; I cannot write *ex abrupto*, and I have never bought a book of congratulations, such as the little fellows here, with horrible screams, offer for sale on the streets for two sous. The Parisians are a singular people ; when the evening approaches, nothing is heard but the cries of the titles of small new books, which consist of three or four pages of printed nonsense. The lads know so well how to commend their wares, that one finally—whether one will or not—buys one for a sou. These bear, for example, the following titles : “The art of winning love, and of keeping it ;—the loves of the priests ;—the Archbishop of Paris with Madame the Duchess de Berry,” and a thousand similar stupidities, which, however, are often very wittily written. One is really astonished to see the means people employ here to win a few pennies.

There is great distress in Paris now, and little money in circulation ; one meets many shabby men with wild expressions, and now and then, there is heard a vehement, threatening conversation about Louis Philippe, who, together with his ministry, is only hanging on by a hair. The mob is incensed at the Government, and would like to

*See *Namenstag*, marginal note in Chapter II, Volume I.

overthrow it in order to end the misery ; they are too much upon their guard, however, for this, and the smallest gathering of men is at once dispersed by the mounted *Gens d'armes*. You know that I live in the fourth story, but on one of the boulevards, in the most beautiful part of the city. I have, besides, a balcony towards the street, and hence to the right and left, a broad, interesting view of the surging population. Just opposite, in the *Cite bergere*, General Ramorino has encamped.* You know, of course, how the Germans everywhere received him ; how in Strausbourg the French hitched themselves to his carriage and drew him away in triumph ; in short—the enthusiasm of the people for our General is, of course, known to you. Paris did not wish to be in the back-ground in this respect. The “*Ecole de Medicine*” and the “*Jeune France*” who wear their beards and cravats according to prescribed rules, planned a great demonstration in his honor. Each political party—I am speaking of course only of excited factions—has its regulated mark of distinction: the Carlists have green vests, the Republicans and Napoleonists (and these really constitute the “*Jeune France*”) the St. Simonists, who

*Girolamo Ramorino, born in Genna, in the year 1792, a natural son of Marshall Lannes, was obliged, for political reasons, to leave his native country and entered the French army to take part in the war against Austria and Russia. During the restoration he lived in Savoy. When the insurrection broke out in Piedmont, in 1821, he marched at the head of the revolutionary Piedmontese troops, which he bravely and successfully led into the conflict. After the end of the disturbances he repaired to France, and went, in 1830, to Warsaw to enter the Polish army as Lieutenant. He advanced quickly to the rank of General, having distinguished himself in many battles. At the end of August, 1831, he was expected at the head of an army-corps of twenty thousand men on the right bank of the Vistula to operate against the Russian General, von Rosen, and supply Warsaw with provisions ; but he performed this task very badly. He might very well have routed Rosen, but through his negligence, and his non-compliance with the commands of the Commander-in-chief, he came to the besieged city too late to give assistance. Ramorino, therefore, deserved no triumph, but the highest contempt and punishment, since he was the chief cause of the great misfortune, by which Poland, after that time, was visited in severe and quickly following strokes. But justice finally overtook him. In the beginning of 1849 he entered the Sardinian army and assumed command of the fifth (Lombard) division ; acting against received commands (as in Poland), he facilitated the conquest of Piedmont for the Austrians. He was arrested, accused of treason, court-martialed and shot on the *Piazzia d'Armi* at Turin, May 22, 1849.

profess a new religion, and have already a great number of proselytes, dressed in blue, etc. About a thousand of these young people marched through the city with the tri-colored flag to offer an ovation to Ramarino. Although he was at home he did not wish to be exposed to unpleasantness from the Government, and therefore did not show himself in spite of all the cries: "*Vive les polonaise!*" His Adjutant came out and said that the General unfortunately was unable to see them, and begged that they would come some other day but the next morning he took other lodgings. A few days after this an immense concourse of people, consisting of young men of respectability as well as of the lowest classes, assembled under the Pantheon and marched over the Seine to Ramarino's. The crowd continued to increase rapidly in number until it arrived at the Pont Neuf, where it was dispersed by several volleys of the gendarmerie, which had been stationed there. Notwithstanding that many were wounded, a new crowd collected upon the boulevards beneath my windows, in order to join those who were to come over from the other side of the Seine. The police could no longer be of service, the tumult was growing constantly greater, until finally a detachment of infantry and a squad of Huzzars approached; the commandant ordered the city-guard and the troops to clear the sidewalks and streets of the curious and turbulent mob, and to arrest the ring-leaders. (This is a free nation!)

The panic spread like lightning. The stores were closed; people crowded together upon the street corners, and the Sargeants were hissed as they galloped through the streets. All the windows were densely crowded with spectators, as with us on great holidays, and the excitement continued from eleven o'clock in the morning, until eleven at night. I thought that affair would end badly, but at last, toward midnight, they sang: "*Allons enfants de la patrie!*" and went home. I cannot describe the impression which was made upon me by the horrible voices of this incensed and dissatisfied mob. Every one feared that the riot would be continued the next morning, but it was not. Grenoble only, followed the example of Lyons. In the meantime the devil knows what may yet come out of

it all. The French are now giving in the Theatre, where hitherto dramas only have been performed, the whole history of our last insurrection. The people run thither as if mad to admire the combats and the national costumes. Fraulein Plater also plays a *role* there with other ladies to whom have been given the name, Lodoiska, Faniska and Floreska. A General Gigult likewise is taking part in it as a brother of Countess Plater etc.*

But nothing has startled me so much as the announcement on the bills of a little Theatre, that between the acts the band will play "*La Mazourka, da Bronski*:" *Poland is not yet lost!*

Of my concert I can tell you only so much, that I am compelled to postpone it to the 15th of January, because Veron, the Director of the Opera, refuses my request for a singer. There is to be a grand concert at the "Italiens" to-day, in which Malibran, Rubini, Lablache, Santini, Mesdames, Raimbeaux, Shroeder and Casadory will appear. Herz and Beriot, with whom Madame Malibran is in love, will likewise take part in it as instrumentalists. Ah, how I wish I could have you with me! You cannot imagine how sad it is to have no one to whom I can pour out my troubled heart. You know how easily I make acquaintances, how I love society—I make scores of acquaintances of that kind—but there is no one with whom I can sigh over my griefs. My heart beats, so to speak, in "syncopes." I am tortured and seek for a rest—for solitude, that no one might see me or speak with me the whole day. It is odious to me, if, while I am writing to you, the bell rings, and some tiresome call is announced. Just as I am about to describe to you the ball, at which I was enchanted by a divine being with a rose in her black hair, comes your letter. All the fancies of my brain vanish;—my thoughts carry me to you; I take your hand and weep. When shall we meet again?—perhaps never, for in all seriousness, my health is miserable. I appear

*Countess Emilie Plater, a young, heroic, Polish lady, who took up arms during the Polish revolution (1831), and in man's attire took part in the war, in General Gielgud's division (the French changed the name to Gilgut). She died in flight. Her life has been described in detail by Straszewicz (Paris, 1834).

cheerful indeed, especially when I am among my friends; but inwardly something torments me, like gloomy forebodings, unrest, evil dreams, sleeplessness, longing, indifference to everything, the desire to live, and again the desire to die. It often seems to me as if my spirit were benumbed, but there is a heavenly peace in my heart; I see in imagination, forms from which I cannot free myself, and this torments me beyond all measure. In a word it is a mingled feeling difficult to describe. Pardon me, dear Titus, that I tell you everything; but now it is enough—now I will dress and go, or rather drive to the dinner which our party gives to-day in honor of Ramarino and Langermann.

Your letter contained much news for me; you wrote me four pages and thirty-seven lines,—my whole life long you have never thought of me so much, and I was somewhat in need of it—was truly, in pressing need of it.

What you write concerning my artistic career is indeed true, and I, myself, am convinced of it. I ride in my own equipage, but the coachman is hired. I close, else I should be too late for the post, for in my own person I am both master and servant. Have pity on me and write as often as possible.

Yours till death,

FREDERIC.

P. S.—In my house there lives a lady whose husband is never at home from morning until late in the evening. My neighbor is beautiful, and often invites me to console her. She has a fireside at which I can warm, and she begs me to appoint a day and hour when I would come, etc.; but I have no desire for adventures, and fear that in the end I might, moreover, be received by "Mr. Club."

I cannot keep it to myself, and must confide to you a second adventure with Piris. Only think, he has with him a very beautiful girl, sixteen years old, whom, as he says, he intends to marry; I became acquainted with her when I visited him in Stuttgart. When he came here he requested me to call, but did not tell me (probably because he knew that then I would surely have visited him sooner) that the young lady, whom I had already forgot-

ten, had come with him. A week after the second invitation I went to him, and on the steps accidentally met his darling. She begged me to enter, assuring me that it was of no consequence, that Piris was not at home; I should take a seat for a little while, he would soon come, etc. A strange uneasiness seized us both, I begged to be excused, because I knew that the old man was very jealous, and said that I would rather come some other time. While we were thus chatting cordially, and innocently, on the steps, Piris came clambering up, peered over his eye-glasses to see who was up there talking with his Bella. He could not have recognized us at once; his steps becomes winged; he stands before us, demanding of her in his gruff tone, "*Qu'est ce que vous faites ici?*" and gives her a second lecture, that she should not venture to receive young men in his absence, etc. I laughingly spoke to Piris, and said to her that it was somewhat imprudent to go out of her room in such a thin silk dress. The old man finally grew composed; he took me by the arm and led me into the drawing-room. He was so excited that he did not know where to seat me, for he feared that—if I were offended with him—I might make better use next time of his absence. At the close of my call he accompanied me down stairs, and seeing my smile (for I could not help smiling that one should think me capable of such a thing), he went to the janitor and asked him how long it had been since I had come? The janitor quieted him at all events, for since that time Piris cannot praise my talent enough before his acquaintances. What do you think of that? I, a dangerous impostor!

Largo

Handwritten musical score for the first system, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is marked "Largo". The notation includes a melody line with a long slur and a piano line with dense chords and some accidentals. The word "piano" is written below the piano line.

Handwritten musical score for the second system, continuing the melody and piano accompaniment from the first system. It includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and accidentals.

Handwritten musical score for the third system, which includes a "Stretto" section. The notation is dense with many notes and slurs. The word "Stretto" is written at the beginning of the system. The system concludes with a double bar line and a fermata.

CATALOGUE

OF THE

Published Works of Frederic Chopin.

I. Works, with the number of the opus :

a. Published during his life-time.

No. Opus.	Title of Work.	Publisher.
1.	PREMIER RONDEAU (C-minor) . .	<i>Brzezina a Varsovie,</i>
		<i>Schlesinger, Berlin.</i>
2.	LU CI DAREM LA MANO (B-major), variations for piano, with orchestral accompani- ment	<i>Haslinger, Vienna.</i>
3.	INTRODUCTION ET POLONAISE BRILLIANTE, (C-major) for piano and violoncello . .	<i>Mechetti, Vienna.</i>
4.	SONATE (C-minor) for piano, (posthumous).	<i>Haslinger, Vienna.</i>
5.	RONDEAU A LA MAZUR, (F-major), for piano	<i>Brzezina, Varsovie,</i> <i>Hofmeister, Leipzig.</i>
6.	QUATRE MAZOURKAS (F-sharp minor, C- sharp minor, E-major, E-sharp minor), for piano	<i>Kistner, Leipzig.</i>
7.	CINQ MAZOURKAS (B-major, A-minor, F-minor, A-flat major, C-major)	do.
8.	PREMIER TRIO (G-minor) for piano, violin and violoncello	do.
9.	TROIS NOCTURNES (B-minor, E-flat major, B- major)	do.
10.	DOUZE GRANDES ETUDES (C-major, A-minor, E-major, C-sharp minor, G-flat major, E-flat minor, C-major, F-major, F-minor, A-flat major, E-flat major, C-minor)	do.

No. Opus.	Title of Work.	Publisher.
11.	GRAND CONCERTO for piano (E-minor), with orchestra	<i>Kistner, Leipzig.</i>
12.	VARIATIONS BRILLIANTES (B-major) for piano, { SUR LE RONDEAU FAVORI DE LUDOVIC DE HEROLD : " JE VENDO DES SCAPULAIRES." {	<i>Breitkopf and Härtel, Leipzig.</i>
13.	GRANDE FANTAISIE (A-major) for piano, sur des airs polonaise, with orchestra.	<i>Kistner, Leipzig.</i>
14.	KRAKOWIAK, GRANDE RONDEAU DE CONCERT (F-major) for piano, with orchestra	do
15.	TROIS NOCTURNES (F-major, F-sharp major, G-minor for piano)	{ <i>Breitkopf and Härtel, Leipzig</i>
16.	RONDEAU (E-flat major)	do.
17.	QUATRE MAZOURKAS (B-major, E-minor, A-flat major, A-minor).	do.
18.	GRANDE VALSE BRILLIANTE (E-flat major)	do.
19.	BOLERO (C-major)	<i>Peters, Leipzig.</i>
20.	PREMIER SCHERZO.	{ <i>Breitkopf and Härtel, Leipzig</i>
21.	SECOND CONCERTO (F-minor) with orchestra.	do.
22.	GRANDE POLONAISE BRILLIANTE (E-flat major) preceded by an Andante Spianato, with orchestra	do.
23.	BALLADE (G-minor).	do.
24.	QUATRE MAZOURKAS (G-minor, C-major, A-flat major, B-minor)	do.
25.	DOUZE ETUDES (A-flat major, F-minor, F-major, A-minor, E-minor, G-sharp minor, C-sharp minor, D-flat major, G-flat major, B-minor, A-minor, C-minor.)	do.
26.	DEUX POLONAISES (C-sharp minor, E-flat minor)	do.
27.	DEUX NOCTURNES (C-sharp minor, D-flat major).	do.
28.	VINGT QUATRE PRELUDES.	do.
29.	IMPROMPTU (A-flat major).	do.
30.	QUATRE MAZOURKAS (C-minor, B-minor, D-flat major, C-sharp minor)	do.
31.	DEUXIEME SCHERZO (B-flat minor).	do.
32.	DEUX NOCTURNES (B-major, A-flat major) ..	<i>Schlesinger, Berlin.</i>

No. Opus.	Title of Work.	Publisher.
33.	QUATRE MAZOURKAS (G-sharp minor, D-major, C-major, B-minor)	{ <i>Breitkopf and Hærtel, Leipzig</i>
34.	TROIS VALSES BRILLIANTES (A-flat major, A-minor, F-major)	do.
35.	SONATE (B-flat minor) with marche funebre.	do.
36.	DEUXIEME IMPROMPTU (F-sharp major).	do.
37.	DEUX NOCTURNES (G-minor, G-major).	do.
38.	DEUXIEME BALLADE (F-major)	do.
39.	TROISIEME SCHERZO (C-sharp minor).	do.
40.	DEUX POLONAISES (A-major, C-minor).	do.
41.	QUATRE MAZOURKAS (C-sharp minor, E-minor B-major, A-flat major)	do.
42.	VALSE (A-flat major)	do.
43.	TARANTELLE (A-flat major).	{ <i>Schuberth and Co., Leipzig.</i>
44.	POLONAISE (F-sharp minor).	<i>Spina, Vienna.</i>
45.	PRELUDE (C-sharp minor).	do.
46.	ALLEGRO DE CONCERT (A-major).	{ <i>Breitkopf and Hærtel, Leipzig</i>
47.	TROISIEME BALLADE (A-flat major).	do.
48.	DEUX NOCTURNES (C-minor, F-sharp minor).	do.
49.	FANTAISIE (F-minor).	do.
50.	TROIS MAZOURKAS (G-major, A-flat major, C-sharp minor).	<i>Spina, Vienna.</i>
51.	ALLEGRO VIVACE, Troisieme Impromptu (G-flat major).	<i>Hofmeister, Leipzig.</i>
52.	QUATRIEME BALLADE (F-minor)	{ <i>Breitkopf and Hærtel, Leipzig.</i>
53.	HUITIEME POLONAISE (A-flat major)	do.
54.	SCHERZO No. 4 (E-major)	do.
55.	DEUX NOCTURNES (F-minor, E-flat major).	do.
56.	TROIS MAZOURKAS (B-minor, C-major, C-minor)	do.
57.	BERCEUSE (D-flat major).	do.
58.	SONATE (B-minor).	do.
59.	TROIS MAZOURKAS (A-minor, A-flat major, F-sharp major)	{ <i>Friedländer, Berlin.</i>

No. Opus.	Title of Work.	Publisher.
60.	BARCAROLLE (F-sharp major).	{ <i>Breitkopf and Hartel, Leipzig.</i>
61.	POLONAISE-FANTAISIE (A-flat major)	
62.	DEUX NOCTURNES (B-major, E-major)	do.
63.	TROIS MAZOURKAS (B-major, F-minor, C-sharp minor)	do.
64.	TROIS VALSES (D-flat major, C-sharp minor, A-flat major)	do.
65.	SONATE (G-minor) for piano and violoncello.	do.

b. Works Left by Chopin.

66. FANTAISIE-IMPROMPTU (C-sharp minor) . . *Schlesinger, Berlin.*
67. QUATRE MAZOURKAS (G-major, composed in 1835; G-minor, 1849; C-major, 1835; A-minor, 1846). do.
68. QUATRE MAZOURKAS (C-major, 1830; A-minor, 1827; F-major, 1830; F-minor, 1849) do.
69. DEUX VALSES (F-minor, 1836; B-minor, 1829) do.
70. TROIS VALSES (G-flat major, 1835; F-minor, 1843; D-flat major, 1830). do.
71. TROIS POLONAISES (D-minor, 1827; B-flat, major, 1828; F-minor, 1829) do.
72. NOCTURNES (E-minor) 1827, marche funebre (C-minor), 1829, et trois ecossaises (D-major, G-major, D-flat major), 1830 do.
73. RONDEAU (C-major) for two pianos; 1828. do.
74. Seventeen Polish songs (by Witwicki, Mickiewicz, Zaleski, etc.) for one voice with piano accompaniment, with German adaptation, by Ferd. Gumbert do.
1. MAIDEN'S WISH (G-major). Stephan Witwicki do.
2. SPRING (G-minor). The same.

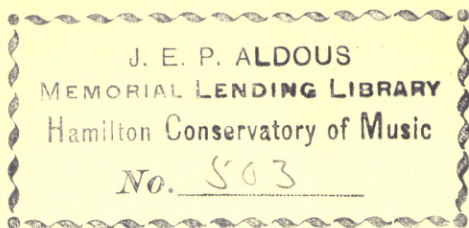
No. Opus.	Title of Work.	Publisher.
3.	TRUEBE WELLEN (B-minor). The same.	{ <i>Schlesinger,</i> <i>Berlin.</i>
4.	BASCHANNE (C-major). The same.	
5.	WAS EIN JUNGES MAEDCHEN LIEBT (A-major). The same.	
6.	MIR AUS DEN AUGEN (F-minor). Adam Mickiewicz.	
7.	DER BOTE (D-major). Stephan Witwicki.	
8.	MEIN GELIEBTER (D-major). Bohdan Zaleski.	
9.	EINE MELODIE (G-major) Anonymous; (Siegmond Krasinski).	
10.	DER REITERSMANN VOR DER SCHLACHT (A-flat major). Stephan Witwicki.	
11.	ZWEI LEICHEN (D-minor). Bohdan Zaleski.	
12.	MEINE FREUDEN (G-flat major). Adam Mickiewicz.	
13.	MELANCHOLIE (A-minor). B. Zaleski.	
14.	DAS RINGLEIN (E-flat major). Stephan Witwicki.	
15.	DIE HEIMKEHR (C-minor). The same.	
16.	LITHAUISCHES LIED (F-major). Same.	
17.	GRABGESANG (E-flat minor).	

II. Works without the number of Opus.

TROIS NOUVELLES ETUDES (F-minor, A-flat major, D-flat major) extraites de la methods des methodes	{ <i>Schlesinger,</i> <i>Berlin.</i>
GRAND DUO CONCERTANT (E-major) for piano et violoncello sur des themes de "Robert Diable," par F. Chopin, et A Franchomme	
	do.

No. Opus.	Title of Work.	Publisher.
	MAZOURKA (A-minor)	<i>Schott, Mayence.</i>
	VARIATIONS (E-major) sur an air national allemand.	{ <i>Haslinger,</i> <i>Vienna.</i>
	HEXAMERON. Only the last variation. . .	
	No. 6 (E-major) is composed by F.	
	Chopin.	do.
	MAZOURKA (A-minor).	{ <i>Bote et Bock,</i> <i>Berlin.</i>
	POLONAISE (G-sharp minor)	<i>Schott, Mayence.</i>
	VALSE (E-minor)	do.
	*MAZOURKA (F-sharp major)	{ <i>J. P. Gotthard,</i> <i>Vienna.</i>
	DEUX VALSES MELANCOLIQUES (F-minor, B-minor.)	{ <i>J. Wildt,</i> <i>Cracovie.</i>

*I am obliged strongly to doubt the originality of this work. The triviality of the individual part-conclusions as well as the inferior, obsolete phrasing (for example at the beginning of page 7) lead me to suspect that this Mazourka is not genuine.



J. E. P. ALDOUS

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